THE EXPOSITORY TIMES.

Notes of Recent Exposition.

CONSERVATISM in theology, strong as the movement is, is not having it all its own way. Last month we reviewed an elaborate study by a Liberal theologian of the historic mission of Jesus. This month we call attention to an exposition of the Christian faith from the pen of another Liberal theologian, or, as we should rather say, of a Liberal Christian philosopher.

Professor James Bissett PRATT, the philosopher in question, is well known on this side of the Atlantic. In his studies in psychology of religion, in which he owed much to William James, he showed himself an able defender of the validity of religious experience. In his studies in comparative religion he showed himself a sympathetic interpreter of the motives and aspirations of ethnic, and more especially Indian, religions. It is quite natural that such studies as we have named should be followed by a treatment of the Christian religion having affinity with the Liberal rather than the Conservative standpoint. The neo-conservatism of our time pays scant respect to religious experience, and sets little value upon the effort of ethnic religion.

The volume now under review, *Can We Keep the Faith?* (Milford; 16s. 6d. net), is addressed to the 'modern man,' that is 'the intelligent modern thinker, abreast of his times, who with deep respect for reason and for the discoveries of science is still genuinely religious, and appreciates profoundly the beauty and the value of the great Christian tradition.'

We have cited Professor PRATT's phrase, 'the great Christian tradition.' His use of it gives the clue to the nature of the body of experience, activity, and belief which he thinks that 'we,' that is, the modern-minded as described above, can 'keep,' and which he earnestly urges us to try to 'keep.'

In the history of our religion three distinct views as to its nature have emerged. The first is that Christianity consists in the teachings *of* Jesus; the second, that it consists in the teachings of the Church *about* Jesus; and the third, that it consists of both the teachings *of* Jesus and the teachings *about* Jesus. We need not dwell upon this point. It is quite familiar to students of the Christian religion. It may be enough to say that to press the first or the second view is to be guilty of a one-sided interpretation of historic Christianity, and that the third is the orthodox view.

But, as our author would have us observe, if the orthodox be the true view, then it depicts Christianity as a religion which can no longer really satisfy the needs of Christendom. He even suggests that it has almost all the difficulties of the two other views put together. 'Every honestly critical study of the New Testament and of Christology will show that some of the teachings purporting (in the Synoptics) to come from Jesus —notably those dealing with eschatology—were plainly quite mistaken; and that many of the ideas of His nature which have been adopted into Christian theology are altogether foreign to His whole scheme of thought.' And he adds, 'Is it possible, then, that Christianity is neither the teachings *of* Jesus nor those *about* Him? If we should accept this view, would there be anything of Christianity left?'

Thus our author indicates a fourth view of Christianity; and we find that he regards it, paradoxical as it may seem, as probably the true one. The reason why he would reject the first three views is that Christianity does not consist in teachings at all. Like the other great historical religions, it cannot be defined in terms of teachings or doctrines. It is a movement in the spiritual life of the race. It has no such form of unity and identity as an unchanging dogma may possess. Its unity and identity are such as are found in all living things. It had certain fundamental characteristics, constant and decisive, in the past, and these continue in the present.

What are those fundamental characteristics? Briefly, they are in the first place a characteristic form of experience; experience peculiarly characterized by love: love for God and love for man. Secondly, they are a characteristic form of activity; an active outpouring of that love which forms the

centre of the Christian experience. Thirdly, they are a characteristic form of belief; and how the Christian views of the world and man should be specified is the question to which a large part of the book is devoted.

The fundamental characteristics of Christianity are all comprised within the 'great Christian tradition,' which is to be defined and traced historically. 'It had its roots largely in the Hebrew tradition, but partly also in Greek soil; it made its first specific and self-conscious appearance in Jesus and the little body of disciples whom He trained, and it continued on through the centuries in a course which historians trace with ease and in harmony. They may disagree in the evaluations which they give to various sections or directions of the flowing stream, but there is no disagreement of anything but a verbal sort as to the distinction of the general Christian tradition from the courses of other religions and of non-religious traditions.'

If we thus give Christianity a historical rather than creedal interpretation, we are ready to see that change, growth, and adaptation must continue to characterize it. Variety of experience and even of creed may well be welcomed, provided that the varied forms be filled with the spirit of Christ. The only kind of unity the Christian Church can hope for, or should wish for, is a unity of the spirit.

We must refer our readers to the work itself if they wish to consider what, according to Professor PRATT, the Christian tradition is on the side of belief. The following summation may serve to throw some light upon his Liberal attitude on this point: 'Christianity is a stream of spiritual life which finds its identity, first, in its unbroken continuity; second, in the retention of certain most fundamental characters underneath a great deal of constant change. These characters are partly affective, partly conative, and partly intellectual. Out of the fundamental intellectual characters, the permanent tendencies to certain very general forms of belief, have grown many specific doctrines, which, though sometimes incompatible with each other, still share a genetic trait, bear to each other a family resemblance, are all parts of the large and inclusive tradition from which they actually sprang.'

We shall only add that the author deals vigorously from his Liberal standpoint with the neo-conservatism, or, as he prefers to call it, the New Supernaturalism of Barth, Brunner, Niebuhr, and Edwin Lewis.

Victory Begins at Home, by Mr. G. H. GRETTON (Allen & Unwin; 7s. 6d. net), may be described as a contribution to the making of a new world. Its proposals, economic and spiritual, are modest and more or less definite, more in the case of the economic, less in the case of the spiritual. But the most interesting part of the book is the introduction, labelled 'Prolegomena.' It contains a general survey of the situation and a general statement of the 'principles' on the basis of which the author makes his suggestions.

He describes Hitlerism as essentially negative, a species of nihilism. It is destructive, the spirit that denies. And its greatest ally has been the decline of Christian faith. Hitler's power is greatest in Germany where the breakdown in faith came first. Free-thinking Denmark made little or no resistance. Anti-clerical Belgium and France were sapped and made ripe for conquest in the same way. It has been in countries where Christianity still has influence—Norway, Greece, and Britain—that resistance to the destroyer has been stubborn.

In Germany for generations no Christian Church has had any real influence on public thought, at least in Northern Germany. The churches failed to meet the challenge of the materialistic doctrines of science in the late nineteenth century. They gave no leadership to a people sorely in want of it. With Christian belief Christian values had gone, and the moral instability turned the material instability into a landslide. Even the 'Weimar Republic,' which some people regarded as a paradise of Liberalism, was unable to stem the current. Economic misery, civil disorder, moral licence, legalized swindling, intellectual charlatanism, petty pilfering were the features of the system. Germans were a people who no longer believed in anything, a nation of pragmatical materialists, and thus they became the raw material of Hitlerism.

But not Germany alone. This cynical, disillusioned materialism spread everywhere. People made the startling discovery that the miracles of the New Testament were incompatible with the findings of modern physics, and concluded that the Christian religion, and all religion, was bogus. And the way was thus cleared for a good time, for money making, ostentation, sexual promiscuity and all the rest, with a maudlin kind of morality,

vaguely attached to the old school tie and with a travesty of its standards.

We have all been in the wrong. And, because of that, Nazi propaganda deeply influenced the British middle-classes. We felt that 'Germany had a case,' Hitler wasn't so bad. And it was this mood that made Munich possible. The fact that we 'funked it,' and, when we had successfully funked it, we revelled in our escape, was due to the rottenness that had crept into our moral life. When the moment came for us to rise up and risk our material prosperity for our faith, our courage failed us. The better minds might well wonder whether the English spirit was not as moribund as Ribbentrop said it was.

Well, if we have all been wrong, Mr. GRETTON asks, what is the application of this humble pie? The answer is: We must correct our mistakes, as far as we can, and then we must give some earnest of our intentions for the future. Our mistakes half-way lost us the war. If we are to win it, we must adopt a different attitude. And as to the future, it should now be clear that the only way of defeating a powerful organized nihilism is to organize men under the banner of a positive aim.

We must not, however, allow ourselves to be dominated by doctrinaires with blue prints of the New Jerusalem. It is clear, for example, that any scheme of federal union must wait till we see the kind of shape Europe will take. If, to take one fact, Vichy remains Vichy to the bitter end, hostile to us and to all liberal things, how can we fit France into any scheme of federalism? And, to take another, what are we to do with the poisoned youth of Germany and its embittered older generation? We cannot take impracticable steps and must 'wait and see.' What we can do is to indicate the general lines of our policy and give that policy body by concrete actions and pledges which are in our power to do and to promise.

The principles which Mr. GRETTON lays down as the standard and basis of our future policy and action are these. First: the impassable gulf which separates us from Nazism, and which allows of only one issue, is our attitude to the individual. We are prepared to respect human beings as human beings. Nazism is not. From this all else, moral and political, comes. The recent manifesto of the churches demanding a chance for all, all round, is an application of this, and is highly praised by Mr. GRETTON.

The second principle is that the good life postulates a certain standard of economic well-being, and any decent aims on which to build an acceptable society must secure this. The most disturbing thing in modern life to multitudes has been the sense of economic insecurity about the present and future, which has resulted from the chaotic economic conditions in almost every country.

And finally, Mr. GRETTON insists that we must have a metaphysical basis for our thought. He means that only a religious faith will make the ground firm enough for any policy that aims at a standard of righteousness. He is regrettably vague about this. But he is quite clear on the general proposition. And in regard to its application he has some highly interesting and important suggestions for the churches as to their action in the present emergency.

In these so anxious and troubled times many Christian people doubtless have their fears and, like Eli of old, are ready to tremble for the ark of God. It is indeed a serious question what the issue of this crisis will mean for the Church of Christ. Will we in combating militarism succumb ourselves to the military spirit, and in the desperate urgency of our material needs suffer the spiritual to be thrust aside and neglected?

For all who entertain such fears we offer a tonic in the shape of a little book just published, *Then and Now*, by Professor John FOSTER (S.C.M.; 6s. net). It is the expansion of certain articles previously published in THE EXPOSITORY TIMES, and, though not a big book, it is rich in matter and heartsome in the highest degree. Written by one who has had close contact with the Younger Churches of the East and has been inspired by the International Missionary Council of Madras, it presents in brief some such vision as St. Augustine after the fall of Rome gave in 'The City of God,' a vision of the Church, Catholic and Apostolic, which is the body of Christ and is destined to endure throughout the ages.

First of all, a just complaint is to be made regarding the almost universal 'failure to appreciate the significance of the modern missionary movement.' Not a line is given to the subject in the 'Cambridge Modern History,' and when one considers that, in the period covered by that history, millions in all lands have been won to the Faith, that indigenous churches have been organized and have demonstrated their unity in

great oecumenical councils, the silence of the historian appears inexcusable.

In these Younger Churches we see, as it were, a rebirth of the Church of the early centuries. They are expanding, as the Early Church expanded, by infiltration; they have to relate their new faith to their old ways of thought and life; they have to encounter heresies of the left and of the right; they have to reorientate themselves and rebuild their whole individual and social life on an altogether new foundation. At the root of all their difficulties lies the age-long problem of how to relate the divine message to the earthly environment. Two opposing attitudes are taken up and two different solutions of the problem are offered, as they were in the Early Church. On the one hand there is the attitude of those who, like the Montanists in the Early Church, hold that the Christian attitude is one of complete opposition to the world and all that is of the world. For them compromise is apostasy. On the other hand there are those who feel that there is much in their natural life which, instead of being combated and cast out, could and ought to be conserved and Christianized. If Greek philosophy as well as Hebrew prophecy was in its own way a *preparatio evangelica* and became the handmaid of Christian theology, why should not Hindu philosophy and Chinese ethical teaching be regarded and utilized in the same way? Along that line there is, of course, the danger which became manifest in Gnosticism of so transforming the gospel under alien thought-forms that its real essence is completely lost.

Such are the problems and difficulties with which the Younger Churches are wrestling, and in their history we can almost see a contemporary re-enactment of the history of the Early Church. But the thing of greatest significance is that there is emerging, and indeed has already emerged, a real consciousness of the Christian Church as a supernatural, supernational, world-wide institution which bears within it the hope of the world. As they declared at Madras, 'In all humility and penitence we are constrained to declare to a baffled and needy world that the Christian Church, under God, is its greatest hope. ... . As we meet here from over sixty nations out of every continent we have discovered afresh that the unity of the body of Christ is not merely an inspiration but a fact. Our nations are at war with one another; but we know ourselves brethren in the community of Christ's Church. Our peoples increase in suspicion and fear of one another; but we are learning to trust each other more deeply through common devotion to the one Lord of us all. Our governments build instruments of mutual destruction, but we join in united action for the reconciliation of humanity.'

Here is a declaration and a practical demonstration of Christian unity which is of the highest significance in view of the world crisis of to-day. It is a call to all Christians to rise above congregational and denominational narrowness of mind, to realize that we belong to the one Holy Catholic Apostolic Church, to cherish the spirit of unity and make that unity manifest before all the world. At the same time it is an impressive testimony to all nations that there is in the world, if only men would give heed to it, a divine centre of unity and a God-given power of coherence which could subdue national enmities and bring in the brotherhood of man.

It is the supreme task of the Church to-day to sound abroad this message through all the world in no uncertain tone. It must meet anti-Christian ideologies with a conviction and an enthusiasm stronger than theirs. We say with some truth that we in this world-war are fighting anti-Christ, but for us as Christians the best political issue we can look for is a curiously dubious one—'victory over anti-Christ with Russia as our partner.' That does not quite look like the coming of the Kingdom of God. Will the Church maintain her witness in purity? 'Just as disaffected Christians of the Eastern Mediterranean in the seventh century were foolish enough to welcome the Moslem invader, so some of these to-day, whose Christian ideals may be strong but whose attachment to corporate Christianity is weak, talk as if concern for social uplift, a juster society, a true internationalism, were a tie which mattered more than the differences between religion and irreligion, love of God and godlessness, Christ and anti-Christ.' There was a time when the League of Nations rose like a beacon out of the dark night and captured the loyalty of Christian hearts. But its light has grown dim and few can be so hopeful as to believe that any mere revival of it will suffice to guide the nations through the dark age which threatens us. 'Perhaps in this greater darkness we may see again the Church as guiding star, the world-wide Church—which has surely come to pass—as object of our transcendent loyalty.' Our hope and prayer must be that, by 'some movement of the Spirit big enough to appeal to all who call themselves Christian, the Church may again unite its scattered members, lift us above our national barriers, heal our denominational divisions, and, above all, achieve a popular significance compared with which the fallen Hitler, and even the victorious Stalin, may seem to have had nothing to offer.'

Reconstruction Problems.

VI. Common Ground Concerning Religious Education.

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Britain is one of the few countries in the world which have refused to secularize their education, whether by law or in practice. Ever since there was a State system of education in this country, however, the 'religious difficulty' has emerged whenever legislation for the development and improvement of education has been afoot. Yet, despite the mischief that has resulted, both in hindrance to educational progress and in the fostering of misunderstandings and suspicions, we are further away from secularism than ever. Indeed, Sir Frederick Mander, Secretary of the National Union of Teachers, remarks in a recent and notable series of articles in *The Schoolmaster* that 'the demand for secular education is to all intents and purposes dead.'

As everybody knows, a thoroughgoing reconstruction of the English educational system is in prospect. It must necessarily deal with all the aspects of education in which advance was made under the Acts of 1870, 1902, 1918, and 1936, as well as with those others which must be included if we are to have a complete and fully integrated system. The place of religion in education is therefore bound to come under discussion, and ought to do so as part of an all-embracing plan rather than as a separate problem. Religious education is not a separable issue, for if religion enters into education at all it must penetrate the whole philosophy of education upon which any living system of organization and administration rests. This is generally agreed by all concerned, though many do not talk in terms of philosophies but speak of the principles or foundations or aims of education.

Why, then, are there already alarms and excursions which might easily end in disastrous clashes on the subject of religious education? First, because of the reprehensible article and letters which appeared in our foremost daily newspaper more than a year ago. Representatives of the Churches in conference with representatives of the teachers and the Education Authorities have strongly repudiated by formal resolution these unfounded and irresponsible generalizations. But secondly, the advancement of the Archbishops' Five Points and the eagerness of certain members of both Houses of Parliament to secure immediate legislation upon them was declared by some untimely. The Five Points, whether sound in themselves or otherwise, are admittedly only a part of a much larger series of particular questions, all of which must be discussed in relation to major agreements on principles and policy governing the national system of education as a whole. Moreover, to press these points at this juncture appeared (though nothing of the kind was intended) like trying to snatch an advantage on special issues before the general scheme is ripe for consideration. Thirdly, the fears and suspicions of teachers, born of bitter experience, make it difficult for them to believe that the Churches are united in anything but the wish to force dogmatic and denominational instruction into the State Schools: on the other hand, the over-anxiety of some leaders of the Churches to ensure that religious teaching shall be sincere and that nothing vital to the Christian faith shall be omitted has caused them to ask for the wrong safeguards.

Frankness and patience in the conversations now going on between Churches, Teachers, and Authorities will avail to liquidate these misunderstandings, which, in view of the progress made during the last ten years, ought not to have arisen. What is supremely important now is that we should all distinguish between the broad principles upon which in fact there is universal agreement and particular applications upon some of which there are differences still to be resolved. If at the same time we could take loose phrases like 'tests for teachers,' 'doctrinal teaching,' or 'denominationalism' a little more coolly, and could examine more carefully what is actually being advocated, we should come much more quickly to a common mind.

I.

Turning, then, to the broad principles it soon becomes evident that we have a firmer and wider basis of agreement than we sometimes recognize. Recognition that the war is against 'evil things' has stirred dormant convictions shared not only by teachers and members of the Churches, but by the majority of British citizens. (It is well to remember, incidentally, that at least as large a proportion of teachers as of any other section

of the community are loyal and active church members.) Blitzes and evacuation have brought out much latent religious feeling. More significant still is it that, as Sir Frederick Mander shows in the articles already quoted, the conception of education itself which increasingly dominates the schools is that of learning to live as fully developed persons in a harmonized community, a conception fundamental to Christianity. There are people who talk and write glib letters in educational papers about the sufficiency of moral instruction, adding in some cases that this is the essential thing common to all religions. But few teachers would be prepared to substitute ethics for religion, or would be satisfied to teach any ethic but the Christian, just as most would, and do, insist that Christianity must be taught as a way of life, not as a mere set of propositions to be believed. In short, by religious instruction the vast majority of teachers mean teaching children that love of God and neighbour which Jesus enjoined and embodied in His life and death. While regarding this as an essential part of the education that children ought to receive they would go further, and say that the whole process and every part of this education should be Christian, in the same way as the civilization for which our men and women are now dying is in measure a Christian civilization and must in future be made more truly so. That religious instruction in particular, and the conduct of school worship, can be improved, and that teachers should be given and should utilize more opportunities of equipping themselves adequately for work which they esteem highly, teachers are themselves the first to agree. They prove their sincerity by the way in which they respond to the provision of courses by Education Authorities, Universities and Colleges, and voluntary associations. In Scotland there has been a steady development of co-operation and mutual understanding between ministers and teachers which might equally well be achieved in other parts of these islands.

It should on the other hand be recognized that the growth among clergy and ministers of active interest in religious education is disinterested, in the sense that it is not a new campaign of clericalism or a revival of sectarian propaganda. The Christian Education Movement, for example, led by the Headmaster of Winchester and Canon Cockin, is a spontaneous and independent effort to get people to think seriously about education as a whole. The conferences which it has promoted in various parts of the country were meant to bring people from the Churches and people from the schools together to discuss freely, without prejudice or *parti pris*, the facts of the local situation, and find ways in which parents, teachers, administrators, ministers, and clergy can all contribute to the fulfilment of a common task. One has only to read the speeches, pamphlets, and books by clerics and lay enthusiasts, both men and women, of almost any period between Mrs. Trimmer and Dr. Clifford to appreciate the difference between the old attitude of the clergy towards schools and teachers and the new. There are still exceptions, but their importance is more apparent to themselves than to any one else in the Churches which they misrepresent.

Surely, then, if there is a recrudescence of fruitless and mischievous controversy it can spring only from failure to exercise intelligence, fairness, and goodwill in dealing with genuine difficulties on either side about particular applications of principles not in dispute.

II.

It is agreed that the children should be taught those plain, simple truths of Christianity which all Christian Churches believe and proclaim. By definition these truths are within the scope permitted by the Cowper-Temple Clause, which forbids the teaching in State Elementary Schools of any catechism or formula distinctive of any particular denomination. This prohibition is repeated in Clause 72 of the Education Act of 1921, referring to State Secondary Schools, the only difference being that if parents wish it, ask for it, and pay for it, denominational teaching may be given in such secondary schools—an option which is practically never exercised. This provision regarding secondary schools may become important if and when recommendations of the Hadow and Spens Reports that all schools for children over eleven shall be secondary in status and character are incorporated in an Act of Parliament. In effect the Cowper-Temple Clause applies to both Elementary and Secondary Schools. To alter this (save by removing the otiose option in the case of Secondary Schools) would evoke instant and uncompromising opposition from Authorities, teachers, and powerful elements in the Churches. If there are any advocates of so rash a proposal they are very much in the minority. But complaints have been made in some quarters that the most recent Agreed Syllabuses are too elaborate and too theological.

Both criticisms may be valid, but certain facts must be kept in view. No teacher is ever expected by the compilers of a Syllabus, or required by the Education Authority which has caused it to be compiled or has adopted it, to be enslaved by it. The Syllabus is invariably stated by its authors to be for the guidance and help of teachers, who select from it the material they consider suitable and build their own lessons accordingly. The one

thing that is urged upon them is that they should preserve the general outline of the Syllabus, so that pupils may in due course gain a reasonably well-proportioned knowledge of the Bible as a whole. Most Syllabuses indicate which Biblical passages or incidents should be retained for this purpose, even if much else has to be omitted. All compilers have to bear in mind that a Syllabus must meet the needs of very different types of school, with varying conditions as to time available, pupils' background, and teachers' individual approach to the work.

Most recent Syllabuses have interspersed notes intended to help teachers on matters about which, at refresher courses, conferences and elsewhere, they most frequently ask. If they do not find such help in the Syllabuses they must needs go to a variety of other books and search for it, often having to weigh one scholar against another. The note is an endeavour to give a brief consensus upon which the teacher can rely as data in making up his own mind. But there may be too much of a good thing. What should be clearly understood is that the notes are only what they purport to be. It is no more anticipated that the teacher should accept and reproduce them unquestioningly than that he should accept and reproduce what he finds, for example, in the *Clarendon Bible* or the *Moffatt Commentary*. There is, however, a great difference between reducing theological explanation to a minimum, or eliminating it altogether, and ridding a Scripture Syllabus of doctrine. For doctrine is not the same thing as dogma, and acceptance of the substance of the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds is by no means commitment to the literal form and interpretation of either.

This is an issue on which all parties must be unambiguously clear. Truth in religion is not determined by counting heads, but in a democracy the convictions and will of the majority must prevail, and minorities must be fairly treated without being allowed to obstruct the majority or even, on the plea of respect for minority convictions, to rule it. In a country like our own, where Christianity is predominantly Protestant and Trinitarian, the Syllabus followed in a State School can neither be reduced as dogmatically inclined Unitarians would have it nor extended as Roman Catholics would wish. But in saying frankly that to satisfy the Churches Christian teaching in the schools must be Trinitarian it is imperative to add that this is in the New Testament sense, which is experimental and doctrinal, not metaphysical or even highly theological. The whole New Testament rests upon the fact that in the completely human Jesus of Nazareth the men who were His friends and followers found God. They learned about God from Him, but He became more to them than a teacher. They realized that God was speaking to them *in* Him, that in His death and resurrection God was taking action *for* them, that later, after Pentecost, the Spirit that was in Him was at work in them. Yet they never found reason to depart from the conviction which was the very core of their Jewish inheritance, that there is only one God, though now they knew that He is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

All this is so familiar to ministers and theologians that some may wonder why one should take space to say it here. The point is that the Churches so often do not say it in everyday language. Teachers are consequently led to suppose that they are being asked to accept and teach archaic credal formulæ quite beyond the range of children's capacity to understand and appreciate. Similarly the other cardinal articles of the Faith—the Incarnation, the Atonement, the Resurrection and Ascension, the gift of the Spirit, the Church as the Body of Christ—will seem to many teachers to be rigid, remote dogmas unless they are presented as Paul had to present them to the common people in Corinth, in Ephesus, and in Rome, or as the missionary must present them to plain and ordinary folk in Africa or China to-day. Everything depends upon the way in which the truth is put.

If, however, it is made plain that teachers are not being asked to do the work of the theologians and the clergy, that the doctrine in Agreed Syllabuses is not Anglican or Methodist, Presbyterian or Congregationalist, but is what all the Churches teach because it is what the New Testament was written to proclaim, a greater service is rendered to teachers than the disarming of their suspicions. They feel more free to make common cause with the Churches. For they maintain, and in practice they prove, that they want to teach 'the simple truths of the Bible.' They know that, even if they would, they cannot take a class of intelligent children through the Gospels and the Acts without being asked why we should think of God as Father, why Jesus is called both Son of Man and Son of God, why He should have been crucified, and whether He really rose from the dead. They explain these facts, and it never occurs to them that they are teaching doctrine. Their aim is to teach a living religion and way of life, not mere Biblical history and literature. There are no doubt many teachers, who by reason of circumstances and not from choice, find themselves teaching officially something which has never come alive for them personally: it is at best a 'subject' of intellectual interest and, if the right parts are selected, of ethical value. But for the majority of teachers it

is the impartation of their own faith, as simply and clearly as possible, to children and adolescents who neither need nor understand theological argument and denominational tenets, but who do need to be brought into the knowledge, love, and service of God as Jesus Christ has made Him known to men. If teachers are shy and suspicious of 'doctrine' it is largely the fault of the Churches.

This raises the question of 'tests for teachers.' Here, of course, there is, unhappily, abundant reason for teachers to be vigilant to the point of hypersensitiveness. So long as the dual system exists there will be schools, whether as now in great numbers or, as may eventually be the case, in relatively small, from which teachers who do not belong to the Anglican or the Roman Catholic Church will be debarred, or in which they will have no prospect of a headship. The future of the dual system is too complicated a matter to be discussed, or dismissed, in a paragraph. It is perhaps enough to say that there is no case whatever for the continuance of any school maintained out of public funds which the Church responsible cannot make educationally adequate. There is unquestionably a strong and widespread public conviction that no more money should be given by the State to aid the building of new denominational schools of any type or to keep in existence any that monopolize 'single-school areas.' Black-listed schools must go, and quickly. All this means rapid diminution in the number of schools which can legitimately apply denominational tests to prospective teachers.

The really vital issue concerns the State Schools, which must be governed strictly by the principle embodied in the Cowper-Temple Clause, whether they are primary schools or secondary. If it is agreed that the Christian faith as contained in the New Testament is to be taught competently, adequately, and sincerely, how is such teaching to be ensured without discrimination among teachers to the professional disadvantage of at least some ?

The complete body of teachers is like any other section of the community. If there are within it many members of Churches, and perhaps more who are sincerely Christian without denominational attachment, there are also many who are otherwise, and there may be some who are sincerely opposed to Christianity. The very principle of Christianity itself demands that no one should either profess belief or undertake to teach the Christian religion save by spontaneous desire. The plain corollary is that only those should be expected to participate who choose as freely to do so as they choose to teach modern languages or science. In this sense teachers of Scripture must be self-selected. The time-table must be so arranged that this is possible. The changes in the Education Act suggested by the Report of the Joint Conference of Anglicans and Free Churchmen are those necessary to put elementary schools in the same position as secondary with regard to time-table and inspection by H.M.I. Probably withdrawal of children for denominational instruction elsewhere would have to be surrendered ; but the assurance that Biblical teaching is given in State Schools by well-equipped teachers entirely of their own free will is surely worth that surrender. After all, the Churches ought surely to do their own work in their own time.

Teachers rightly ask to be trusted. The Archbishop of Canterbury has declared in the House of Lords that they should be. On their part they must trust the Churches, which through their authorized representatives have emphatically and repeatedly declared themselves opposed to anything which would make the appointment or advancement of a teacher in a State School (except in the obvious case of a 'Scripture Specialist') depend directly or indirectly upon his or her willingness or otherwise to take part in teaching religious knowledge. What the Churches have said, and surely not unreasonably, is that a teacher who elects to take part should have devoted some systematic study to the subject, whether in college or at such courses as Local Authorities provide, and that he should be afforded ample opportunity for doing so. It is not even suggested that he should pass an examination in it, though it is urged that students should be free, if they so desire, to include it as an optional subject in their certificate or diploma examinations, just as they are in Higher School Certificate examinations.

The question we need to ask ourselves is whether, instead of contending over the bodies and souls of the children in the schools, we ought not to be devoting all our resources and all our energies to giving teachers the help they ask for, and to promoting adult education in religion. With this a further article will deal.

Literature.

HUMAN NATURE.

The first series of Dr. Reinhold Niebuhr's Gifford Lectures, delivered in 1939 at Edinburgh University, has appeared under the title *The Nature and Destiny of Man*, vol. I. *Human Nature* (Nisbet ; 15s. net). The book is a powerful and provocative interpretation of the Christian answer to the question, What is man ? And the author brings the answer into close and searching contact with the confusions and anxieties of contemporary life.

The theme of the first part of the book (chs. 1–4) is that modern culture has failed to use the resources in the Christian faith for an understanding of human nature. The Reformation recovery of these resources was shortlived. What became prevailing in the modern development was the Renaissance view of man, a view which exalted the autonomous individual, with his rational capacities for achieving harmony over nature and himself. The main tendency of this was to mitigate 'the uneasy conscience,' to create optimistic gospels of progress, and to deal superficially with the destructive possibilities that belong to man in all the rational and vitalistic expressions of his life. Modern culture lost the integral self, and thereby our civilization has left man at the mercy of the impersonal valuations of a technical order, and the servant of new despotisms of mind and will.

The Christian understanding respects the depth of the human problem, and, in its measure of man as creature, child of God, sinner, the total truth of every moment of human existence is preserved. To the exposition of this with great detail Dr. Niebuhr devotes the main part of his book (chs. 5–10). It is upon the significance of sin, understood in terms of the revelation of a God who is Judge and Redeemer, that this study concentrates. Man's life as creature is not apart from God, and nature is not explanatory of sin. Man is not united by his reason with the Divine as the Greeks thought, for his capacity for self-transcendence, which the idea of the 'image of God' symbolizes, is a quality of spirit more unique than the possession of concepts of reason.

Sin belongs to this higher dimension of his being. What man knows in his self-transcendence is the Otherness of God, the God who is Creator both of his bounds and his freedom. What man does in and with this knowledge is to make pretensions to have the divinity of that Other in himself. He seeks severance from this Source of all meanings and finite good, and sets up 'false eternals' in and for himself. Sin is essentially this pride. It is inevitable yet not a natural necessity, a paradoxical truth which the idea of Original Sin announces. Freedom and bondage are discovered together in every moment of existence. Hence the life of man, as nature and as spirit, has an insecure, a tragic character. Only by the God who remains both Judge and Redeemer can the frustrations of his individual and communal being be resolved. Culture has ignored this, and therefore its offers of salvation for man in contemporary history are superficial substitutes for the divine 'fulfilment' of life.

This is a very inadequate summary of a book, rich in content and range of interest. Theologically it takes its stand very generously on Augustinian foundations, and looks for much inspiration also to the dialectical method of thought made familiar through the writings of Barth and Kirkegaard. Not all who will cordially accept Dr. Niebuhr's insistence upon the need for a revived sense of the inwardness and depth of the human problem will be easily persuaded that his Augustinian theologizing can command so full a Scriptural support as he claims for it. Incidentally, the Index of Scripture passages has very few references to Synoptic material on the mind and teaching of Jesus. Is it an adequate comprehending of the total human situation to subsume all sin under the one concept of impious rebellion against the Sovereignty of God ? In the mind of some readers who follow after the author in his searching analysis of cultural trends the question will arise whether his social interests, which have been from the beginning of his career intense and restless, have not exercised undue coercion upon his theological valuation of the nature and relevance of Revelation. But, as the author himself reminds us, the argument of the first series is incomplete, and looks forward to a further elucidation and defence in his second volume in which he will deal with 'Christian doctrines of the fulfilment of human life and history.' And he hopes that critical appraisal will await the completed intention of his exposition. That further study will be awaited with respect and eagerness, for the author has given us in this volume a forceful book, and his ideas are stimulating all the time.

JOHN MACLEOD.

THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST.

The Bishop of London's Lent book has been written by Dr. C. E. Raven, the Master of Christ's College, and Regius Professor of Divinity at Cambridge—*Lessons of the Prince of Peace* (Longmans ; 2s. 6d. net). It is a great gain to have a book of devotion from one who is not only devout but also a thinker. We escape from the close atmosphere of a narrow pietism into the clear light of day, and our devotion is awakened, not by sentiment only, but by coherent thought. In this book we are under the guidance of a mature mind that at every point brings us face to face with fundamental facts.

The main truth which Dr. Raven insists on is that the world is sacramental. God is everywhere, and is to be found everywhere. This is

the first lesson of the school of Jesus. And it is a revolutionary one. It should reverse the order of the Church Catechism, and make us begin not with ourselves but with God, not with creeds but with sacraments. It will change evangelism, because we shall preach God's glory rather than denounce man's sin and start our doctrine from the Creation not the Fall. It will take us back to the joy of the Galilean ministry out of the murky light of Jewish eschatology or Barthian Calvinism.

This is the governing truth of the book, and from it we proceed easily to some of its consequences. This truth will deliver us from the conception of religion as escapism, and also from a kind of mysticism which is totally unchristian. For a real sensitiveness to God will show us that religion means service. The unity of work and worship, Dr. Raven thinks, is one of the great gains of the past century. But this means a closer relation with Jesus and with His Church, of which He is the soul and true self. And so, inevitably, we reach the Cross where we find God in His sovereignty and sufficiency.

This bare indication of the trend of a remarkable book does not reveal its richness in thought and theme. It deals with many matters on the way —the urgent need of Church reform, for example, the part Christians will have to play in the renewal of the world's life, the substitutes which human frailty puts in the place of a sane and Christian way of life and faith. There is strenuous thinking on great themes ; in a sense it is theology, but it is always simple, and it will help many to understand what the gospel of Christ really is and what it asks of us. F. J. Rae.

Contemporary Religious Thought, a handsome volume of over four hundred closely printed pages, is ' An Anthology ' compiled by Professor Thomas S. Kepler, D.D. (Abingdon-Cokesbury Press ; $3.50). It contains sixty selections from the works of theological writers who are described as ' the giant minds of to-day ' and ' the great spirits of the western world.' It must be reassuring to the Christian churches of America to find that so many of these great spirits and giant minds are occupants of their Divinity Chairs. Six main topics are dealt with, namely, the nature of religion, the finding of religious truth, the idea of God, the problem of evil, the meaning of worship, and immortality. Under each of these headings ten extracts are given. The variety of view represented may be inferred from the fact that the writers quoted include Karl Barth and Emil Brunner, William James and John Dewey, Rufus Jones and Evelyn Underhill, with many others less well known. The number of extracts given and the conflict of views expressed sustains the reader's interest throughout. But it is to be feared that any one seeking religious enlightenment would be left with a feeling of bewilderment. On the other hand this makes the volume all the more faithful a reflection of the chaotic thinking of the age. Professor Kepler is to be congratulated on his great industry and patience in making this compilation, on his discriminating taste in selection, and the value of the work he has done.

Pastoral Psychology, by the Rev. Karl R. Stolz, Ph.D., D.D. (Abingdon-Cokesbury Press ; $2.50), is a revised and enlarged edition of a book which has been reprinted several times since it was first published in 1932. No specially new feature has been added to the work, but it has been generally brought up-to-date and some fresh material introduced. This edition ought to give a new lease of life to a book which has already, by its sanity, balance, and psychological insight, given help and guidance to many who have the cure of souls.

The Path to Reconstruction, by Mrs. Charles E. B. Russell (Black ; 3s. 6d. net), is ' a brief introduction to Albert Schweitzer's Philosophy of Civilization.' The writer, who is associated with Schweitzer in his work in Africa, disclaims any special competence for her task, but writes as ' just one of the ordinary people in the world's audience,' who feels strongly that ' Dr. Schweitzer's is exactly the philosophy for which this distressful age is waiting.' Accordingly the little book is entirely uncritical. It consists in the main of two chapters, the first on the decline of civilization and the second on reconstruction. Schweitzer's criticism of our Western civilization is in line with much that is being written to-day, and would find general acceptance. His philosophy of reconstruction, on the contrary, raises grave questions. Its fundamental principle is reverence for life— all life, down to the insect and the microbe. The immediate fact of consciousness is ' I am life which wills to live, in the midst of life which wills to live,' and therefore man's supreme moral task is to bring to their highest value his own and all other kinds of life. If obliged to take life, animal or vegetable, even the minutest bacteria, ' it should be with compunction and with a bad conscience.' How the individual will-to-live is reconciled with altruistic regard for other lives and self-sacrifice for them is not made plain. It is spoken of as ' a debt we owe ' and a ' price to be paid.' No mention is made of the teaching and inspiration of Christ, and many readers will feel that Schweitzer's life is much more Christian than his philosophy, which indeed has closer affinities with Indian thought than with Christian. Any one, however, who wishes an introduction to Schweitzer's philosophy will find it here, written in simple language and with warm enthusiasm.

For those who follow the Christian Year a most helpful volume will be found to be *Festival Sermons*. This has been published by Messrs. James Clarke & Co. (3s. 6d. net). It contains addresses for all the great festivals. There is considerable variety in the manner of the studies, varying from some which are simple and short to Dr. Garvie's full and erudite treatment of the Apostolic Benediction as the Christian Creed (Trinity Sunday). Canon

F. B. Macnutt contributed the Easter address, and we gave an abridged form of this in 'The Christian Year' last month. It will, we think, induce readers to obtain the book.

Others besides lay preachers would benefit by a perusal of *The Lay Preacher and His Work*, by the Rev. A. T. S. James, B.A., M.Sc. (Independent Press; 2s. net). Written at the request of the Lay Preaching Committee of the Congregational Church, it is full of wise counsel and inspiration. It covers adequately the whole ground of the preacher's work, and contains many of those elementary instructions and essential practical hints which students of divinity too often do not get from their Professors. It is a book well fitted to fulfil the high purpose for which it is written.

Under the somewhat enigmatic title of *A Belief that Behaves* (Marshall, Morgan & Scott; 2s. 6d. net) the Rev. Guy H. King has written a series of expository studies of the Epistle of St. James. There are twelve of these studies and they constitute a running commentary of a homiletical kind on the Epistle. The exposition is simple and straightforward, warmly evangelical and abounding in good preaching material. Without attempting anything deep or high it illuminates and commends the plain pathway of Christian faith and duty.

Fading Light, by Canon T. C. Hammond, M.A., T.C.D. (Marshall, Morgan & Scott; 3s. 6d. net), is described in the sub-title as 'The Tragedy of Spiritual Decline in Germany,' but this does not give quite a correct impression of the substance of the book. It contains 'a series of popular lunch-hour talks challenging modern errors made in Germany.' The main interest of the writer is in the religious decline of our age. He sees in the spiritual state of the German people the culmination of this decline, but the same symptoms are manifest in other nations. He writes from a strictly evangelical and perhaps somewhat narrowly conservative point of view and has much to say in condemnation of higher criticism, evolution, and the like. In many of his criticisms there is much truth, and the talks are expressed with such vividness and genuine Irish wit that they make delightful reading.

An excellent book on the nature and necessity of worship has been written by Lindsay Dewar and Phyllis Dent—*Training in Worship* (Rich & Cowan; 5s. net). It is the twenty-fourth volume in the 'Needs of To-day' series, and one of the best. It answers sensibly some of the questions which bother people but are not often faced, such as, for example, 'Does God want our worship? And why?' It also deals very efficiently with the training of children in the meaning and ways of worship. Typical lessons are given, and they are good lessons. But it is not a book for teachers only. The whole subject is looked at, not so elaborately as in, for example, Miss Underhill's great book, but in a practical fashion that, while it is practical, does not fail to deal with the broad problems the subject raises. Different types of worship, the peril of idolatry, what to teach about worship, putting it into practice—these are some of the main headings that reveal the drift of the authors' thinking.

The S.P.C.K. has issued a most excellent little book, *Prayers in Time of Strife*, by Mr. Michael Bruce (1s. net). The writer, who has had wide experience in leading the devotions of mixed groups of Anglicans and Free Churchmen, has for his aim 'to compose prayers in language sufficiently modern to be understood by all, and not to be unreal to those unaccustomed to liturgical prayer, yet at the same time phrased with sufficient care not to grate on ears attuned to the stately language of the Book of Common Prayer.' In this he has attained to a high degree of success. The prayers are brief and definite, each dealing with a single topic. They cover a wide range and are beautifully expressed. They should be a very helpful guide to devotion, both private and public.

Prediction in the Light of Science and Religion, by the Rev. Clement F. Rogers, M.A. (S.C.M.; 1s. 3d. net), is a plain and pointed little book which should prove very useful. The writer is an experienced answerer of questions and he deals effectively with the vagaries of religious prediction. However deep may be the mysteries of God's providence, 'one thing we must believe, namely, that He cannot be silly and hide His messages to man in pyramids and puns. Such superstitions are a relic of polytheism and the worship of demons.' The root error of all these forms of prediction is in the long run a deterministic belief in Fate and a denial of man's free will and moral responsibility.

A book of what may be called simple dogmatic has been written by a 'Confessional Church' pastor in Germany, Heinrich Vogel. It is called *The Iron Ration of a Christian* (S.C.M.; 6s. net). An interesting account of the author is given in a Preface by Dr. H. H. Kramm, and from this we learn that Vogel was (and is ?) a brave leader of the Church in Germany but has not bowed the knee to Hitler. He has been imprisoned and in other ways punished, and Dr. Kramm's last sentence is ominous: 'I know nothing of the present whereabouts of Heinrich Vogel.' The writer has been, to say the least, deeply influenced by Barth. Indeed his first chapter is pure Barth: we do not hear God's voice in Nature, in history, or in ourselves. The rest of the book is a conservative statement of the Christian belief on all doctrinal points, arranged under the rubric of the Trinitarian faith. It is a courageous statement of what (in the writer's view) a Christian is thrown back upon when he is called on to face realities.

PAMPHLETS.

Owing to the shortage of paper many books are now being published as pamphlets which would

(at least in certain cases) normally have been issued in more permanent form. We mention some below, with an indication of their contents.

Spiritualism and Psychical Research, one of the 'Little Books on Religion' published by the S.P.C.K. at 4d., is a very full and intelligent account of the subject. It answers two questions: Is survival proved? and, Has anything of religious value been communicated? These are the two questions we wish to see intelligently discussed.

Copper in Africa, by Mr. T. Cocker Brown, the third number in 'World Issues' (Edinburgh House Press; 3d.), explains what the 'Copper Belt' is, the conditions of labour, the evils and merits of the system, and gives in successive chapters the views of a business man, an African, and a missionary. It also explains in detail what the churches are doing both for white and for dark workers.

A Real Peace, by Viscount Cecil (Hamish Hamilton; 6d.), discusses the general structure of the settlement at which we should aim after the war. There are eight chapters, and every aspect of a pressing question is looked at by one of our acutest minds. The distinguished author may find reason for grim amusement on the back page of his pamphlet which is devoted to an advertisement of 'Black Record,' by Sir Robert Vansittart, 'uniform with this.'

The Church in the World of To-morrow, by Ethel Comber (Fellowship of Reconciliation; 2d.), discusses very briefly the nature of the Church, the nature of the 'world,' and the duty of the Church to its own people and to those without.

The Revelation of St. John, by the Rev. G. T. Manley, M.A. (Inter-Varsity Fellowship of Evangelical Unions; 3d.), contains, according to a modest statement by the author, 'some notes on its interpretation,' but in fact the whole problem is surveyed and the contents, purpose, and interpretation of the Apocalypse are discussed with some fulness.

School Services and Prayers, by Mr. R. J. Seal (Lutterworth Press; 6d), is an unusually good specimen of a type of book which is much needed but is often very imperfectly done. The services are simple but sufficiently full and some of the prayers are extraordinarily beautiful.

Preach the Kingdom. How about the Kingdom? (Christian [Party] Press, Brooklyn, New York), contains a letter to 'Beloved Saints' from Ibrahim K. Haddad, on the Kingdom of God. It was delivered originally at the first meeting of the Kingdom of God Administration, Earth's Office, New York.

The Importance of Liturgy.

By the Very Reverend A. S. Duncan-Jones, B.D., Dean of Chichester.

Signs are not lacking of a growth of interest in liturgical worship north of the Tweed. This can be observed both in the appearance of scholarly and thoughtful books, and in certain changes that have taken place in the furnishing and ordering of churches. In the January number of The Expository Times, the Rev. R. W. Stewart of Killermont, put in a plea on the other side. He has criticisms to offer of certain changes in worship apparently being introduced. Though by no means unwilling to recognize the value of dignified language in public prayer, and the loss that was sustained during the Reformation in Scotland, by a too rigid purge of ancient customs, and the abandonment of prayers that saints of many centuries have used, he yet stoutly maintains that, broadly speaking, the Scottish Reformation was right in placing supreme emphasis on the prophetic declaration of the word from the pulpit. If I understand him aright, what Mr. Stewart means is that, after all, the great point of the prayers is that they should form, as it were, an extension of the sermon, and that they should be concentrated on the specific needs, wishes, hopes, and fears of the people in front of the preacher. The minister in his prayers must think more about engaging the interest of his congregation than the adequacy of his words from a Godward point of view.

This is a point of view that certainly demands consideration. But it is equally certainly not without its dangers.

Evelyn Underhill has defined worship with precision. 'Worship is an acknowledgment of Transcendence, that is to say, of a reality independent of the worshipper, which is always more or less deeply coloured with mystery, and which is there first.'

Worship is a response, not a search or a consolation.

Worship implies the priority of God. Objectivity is its keynote. It is God who takes the initiative. God 'prevents' all that man does. The characteristic expression of man's response is the Te Deum Laudamus. 'Thee we praise as God, Thee we acknowledge as Lord.' Petitions, the

consideration of the self and human needs, only follow recognition of the reality of God, and the supremacy of His Will. This is seen quite plainly in the classical prayer given to us by Our Lord. 'Hallowed be thy name, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, in earth as in heaven.' These all take precedence of requests for daily bread and forgiveness of sins.

It is this sense of the supremacy and priority of God that gives Calvin's teaching its rock-like strength. Calvin declared that the chief end of man was to know God, because He created us, and placed us in the world that He may be glorified by us. The true knowledge of God is that which leads us to honour Him. Calvin himself draws attention to the way in which the Lord's Prayer carries out this purpose. 'The whole Prayer is of such a kind that the upholding of God's glory must everywhere be put first, for the first three petitions are particularly devoted to God's glory, and are in no way concerned with our advantage.'

To an age debilitated by man pleasing, and the prostitution of religion into a human commerce, Calvin's teaching came with the bracing effect of an east wind, shrivelling in its blast the easy comforts of a cosy triviality.

In the Kerr Lectures for 1935 (*Our Heritage in Public Worship*, 180) Mr. D. H. Hislop stresses 'the atmosphere of reverential awe before the Sovereign Will of Grace,' as the keynote of the Reformed Service.

Mr. Hislop rightly contrasts the difference of accent in the Lutheran service, which tended to concentrate on the experience of the Word in the human heart. This was the beginning of a process which more and more made the feelings of the worshipper the criterion of the value of worship, a process heavily accelerated by the growth of Methodism. Those strains in philosophy, which made the ego the centre and put sentiment in the ascendant, came in to assist. And the poets of the romantic period, with their passion and lyricism, were an influence making in the same direction. Thus, in English-speaking lands, the intellectual and emotional atmosphere became increasingly unfavourable to the God-centred view of the world which is essential to Christian worship. 'Humanism,' as Berdyaev says (*The Meaning of History*, 140), 'denied that man was made in the image of God; that he was the reflection of the Divine Being. Humanism not only affirmed man's self-confidence and exalted him, but it also debased him by ceasing to regard him as a being of a higher and divine origin.'

We are witnessing to-day the consequences of the shifting of the centre of gravity. When man forgets his heavenly origin he sinks below the human level and becomes as the brutes that perish. In a sphere of worship it leads to a purely personal appraisement. The only questions to be asked are, 'What good do I get out of it?' 'What does it mean to me?' When religion ceases to be regarded as an attitude to the universe, as a response to the source of life and goodness and beauty, it is small wonder that church attendance declines. Mr. Stewart makes a revealing statement by the way. 'A grand and expensive service in which, as a matter of fact, only a few members of the public join, almost inevitably makes the suggestion that adoration is something God needs.' 'Something God needs'—obviously absurd: is the thought that lies behind!

But God certainly does 'need' adoration, or the Prophets and Psalmists, St. John and St. Paul, and the authors of the Hebrews and the Apocalypse, were hopelessly wide of the mark.

'Ascribe unto the Lord, O ye kindreds of the people, Ascribe unto the Lord worship and power.'

It was when Isaiah was in the Temple taking part in the Hebrew liturgy that God 'needed,' that he heard one cry unto another. 'Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of Hosts.'

The truth that man has a duty to worship God, who demands his worship, was well understood by Calvin. It was to restore this sense of duty, the duty of a creature to the Creator, that he ruthlessly cut away everything that seemed to stand in its path. He wished to restore to His full grandeur the God, who is the Supreme Will, the *Deus Absconditus*, the supernatural Mystery, and also the eternal love who has made a Divine sacrifice which is the only hope of mankind. To this God man the sinner owed a debt, to pay which was a duty that demanded the devotion of his whole being.

Calvin's eyes were blinded by the prevailing degradations of religion, which prevented him from seeing that the very same thought of the Supreme God, the centre and source of grace, without which man sinks into the abyss, lay at the heart of the faith of the Catholic Church and of the true tradition of its worship.

But if the recognition of the worth of God, the response to His Majesty, the promotion of His Glory is the central thing in worship, it is not less important to observe that Christian worship is essentially corporate worship. It is the common approach to God of a community; it is the activity of a body. And this remains true even when that worship is performed in the closet. Our Lord laid great stress on private prayer, on the need of withdrawing. But the private prayer of a Christian is still the worship of one who draws near always as a member of the elect race, the

royal priesthood, the holy nation. The prayer that Our Lord gave His disciples is emphatic on this point. 'Our Father,' He makes us say, not 'My Father.' Calvin is clear about this too. To Calvin the thought of the Church as the elect People of God is as necessary as the thought of God Himself. The worship of the elect People of God must find expression in common and public prayer.

It has been thought worth while to develop these first principles at some length because the relative importance of liturgical and of extempore prayer cannot be rightly assessed if they are regarded merely as two methods which can be adopted according to individual taste. In a measure individual taste does enter in. There exist undoubtedly different temperaments. To some, set forms are agreeable; to others, free prayer seems more natural and expressive. But this does not go to the root of the matter. The question that really must be answered is which on the whole fulfils best the requirement of worship, which best upholds the sovereignty and majesty of God, and preserves in the worshipper the sense that he is a member of a sacred community, a community which, to quote Calvin again, does not consist only of those whom the worshipper sees and knows, but one that embraces all men all over the earth —and, one must add, all men who have passed beyond in the faith and fear of Christ.

In this connexion I should like to refer to an article written by Dr. Reinhold Niebuhr some years ago in the *Spectator*. I have unfortunately not got it by me. So I cannot quote his actual words. But the gist of it remains very clearly in my mind. Dr. Niebuhr described how immensely he had been impressed, during a visit to England, by the services of the Anglican Church. They had brought home to him the immense value to the ordinary worshipper of the use of a liturgy like the Book of Common Prayer in a time of transition, when the foundations of religion had been so largely obscured or shaken. The set forms were deeply impregnated with the thought of the sovereignty, the supremacy, and the reality of God. They thus formed a wonderful bridge to carry those who used them over a period of doubt and instability. There is in these set forms a noble objectivity, which is an admirable corrective to the feeble subjectivity which threatens to engulf any religion that can be truly called Biblical or Christian. I am bound to add that there was one other thing that astonished Dr. Niebuhr. He found it strange, when he came to listen to the sermons of the Anglican clergy, how little they seemed themselves to have grasped the true character of the book they both used and admired. To put it shortly. The Prayer Book is Augustinian; but their sermons are Pelagian—uplift, moral exhortations, bright ideas, or merely chat. We Anglicans must ruefully admit the broad truth of this impression.

But this is the point. There is no doubt that the ordinary worshipper's outlook is on the whole far more moulded by the service than by the sermon, and this remains true despite the unyielding refusal of a large number of the Anglican laity to regard a service unaccompanied by a sermon as an adequate act of worship. Against this must be set the fact that it is increasingly the case that the really convinced Anglicans tend to make the Holy Communion the centre of the worship; when they are not actually receiving the Sacrament they assist at a celebration of the Holy Eucharist. In both cases they more often than not hear no sermon. I am not saying that the failure to hear sermons is in itself a good thing. I am sure it is a loss. But I think it probably true that in a dim kind of way many of them feel that the sermons they do hear are not, as they should be, on the same numinous level as the sacred rite of the Church.

The point that has to be established is this. If we are to consider the modern man and his true needs in the realm of religion, are these best satisfied—as things are—by the liturgical or the unliturgical service? In the unliturgical service the prayers naturally tend to take on the colour and to reproduce the ideas of the sermon. If the sermon is subjective, humanist, man-centred, is it not highly probable that the prayers will have the same character? If this be so, can it be questioned that the liturgy does preserve some sense of the God-centredness which is the essence of true worship? Calvin exalted the sermon because he hoped and believed that the sermon would always be sacramental, a reflection of the Divine Majesty, an utterance of the Most High through the lips of man. It would have about it that which the prophets conveyed when they said, 'Thus saith the Lord.' And the prayers would carry on this prophetic note. Experience shows that this has ceased to be true. And to this is surely to be attributed the creeping paralysis that, until recently, had overtaken so large a part of the Protestant world in Europe and America. Whether the liturgy is used or not we need more sermons that are God's Word on the lips of man.

The advantage of the liturgy is twofold. All liturgies are deeply soaked in the language and thought of the Bible. They express in the right kind of way what the worshipper should say when he approaches the Most High. The phraseology of the Bible can never lose its appeal both to the educated and the uneducated.

Again it surely is true that a liturgy sets the worshipper free to incorporate his own aspirations in a way that none but the most skilful and profound of the makers of extempore prayer can. He knows what is coming and can make it his own. When the minister prays, the worshipper is limited by the ability of the minister, who may have many excellent qualities, but not the rare gift of the spiritual and literary artist required for the composition of prayers. In trying to utter a prayer that will realize the thought of the worshipper the minister will miss the mark again and again. His personality obtrudes itself, and comes between the worshipper and God. In the end all he can do is to formulate 'an average or accepted compromise combination of the various sentiments of the membership.' A liturgy does this better.

Liturgies have another advantage. Their ancient origin is in itself a link with the whole community of praying Christians since the early days. The traditional has authority. It has formed countless souls—including St. Francis of Assisi and John Wesley. Mr. Stewart, I feel, is apt to confuse the traditional with the conventional. Convention is mere use and wont, and that can co-exist as easily with free prayer as with set forms. Liturgists are sometimes pedantic. But a tradition that persists from the great formative period when the Church was conquering the world and producing martyrs has hidden sources of strength, of truth and faith, that produce living waters. What the Church as a whole needs is both prophetic preaching, and also the noble language of liturgy, alike lifting men to God's glory.

In the Study.

Virginibus Puerisque.

A Missionary Tree.

By the Reverend Martin B. Shields, M.A., Edinburgh.

'He shall . . . cast forth his roots as Lebanon. His branches shall spread.'—Hos $14^{5f.}$.

In the grounds of Newbattle Abbey, near Edinburgh, there stands a very large beech tree. It is a very old tree with an exceptionally thick trunk and great spreading branches, some of which droop down to the ground. With the passing of time, these branches have pushed their tips into the rich leaf-mould which lies round the base of the tree and have taken root, thus becoming trees themselves as well as branches. The sap which the mother-tree draws from the earth still goes to strengthen these branches, and the sap which their roots draw goes to nourish and sustain the mother-tree. Thus the one helps the other.

This tree makes us think of our homes. Our fathers and mothers have done a great deal for us, giving us ungrudgingly of their love and care, and some day, like the branches of the big beech tree, we shall grow up and strike out roots for ourselves. Then, though we shall have our own life to live, we must never forget the old family ties, and we shall be able to help our parents when they need us most.

The tree also makes us think of our country and our Empire. Our island home is the mother of many peoples across the seas, and now some of these British branches have become deep-rooted trees themselves. Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa are all branches which have taken root, but they are still joined to the mother-tree as part of her life, and now they are helping to sustain her in her hour of need.

But, most of all, the tree makes us think of the Church of our Lord Jesus Christ. For many years the Mother Church in our island has been sending out missionaries to countries which have never heard of Jesus, and, by the devoted work of these men and women, daughter churches have sprung into being. In China, India, and Africa, and many other parts of the world, these branch churches have taken root and are growing in strength and influence with every year that passes. They are part of the one great Church of God, each rooted in its own soil, but still joined to the Mother Church from whence they sprang. The Church at home helps them to be strong, and they send new life back into our Church, for a Missionary Church is always a Living Church.

People often ask what good our missionaries have done. The answer is seen in these young churches of other lands which are part of the world-wide Church of Jesus Christ. In these days of bitter warfare let us remember that there *is* a world-wide Church greater than all the divisions and quarrels of nations because the source of its strength is a Living Lord.

The Forgotten Door.

By the Reverend John Wilding, B.A., King's Norton.

'He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much.'—Lk 16^{10}.

Someone forgot to bolt and bar a door. That meant the end of a thousand-year-old empire, the loss of thousands of lives, of untold wealth, and of priceless books and treasures of the past.

In the year 1543 a besieging army took up its position before the great city of Constantinople. For more than 1000 years it had been the capital of a great empire, an empire slowly shrinking. Now there was only the city itself left, and it stood as a Christian outpost against the invading Turks. There the Emperor Constantine faced and defied the Sultan Mahmud.

For six weeks the city withstood all assaults against its colossal walls. True its outer walls were breached by the great cannon of the Sultan, but an entrance into the city could not be gained in face of the gallant resistance of the Christians.

On 29th May a final assault began at one o'clock in the morning when 100,000 men bearing ladders and arms rushed the walls. For two hours they were thrust back with fearful slaughter, but the defenders were tiring. Twelve thousand more picked troops were led to the attack by the Sultan himself, but still the defence held out. And this outpost of Christendom would probably have been held but for an improbable event.

Through one of the gaps battered in the outer ring of walls there went a few Turkish soldiers. They neared the second line of walls with no intention of trying to scale them when one of them found a door which yielded to his push. This door was called Kerkaporta and was a smallish door used for foot passengers in time of peace. The great city-gates had been closed, but no one had closed this. Every gate and every loophole and breach in the walls was bitterly defended, yet here was an open way into the city. At first the Turks suspected a trap and they advanced warily and in ones and twos. Soon a whole company had passed into the city and took the defenders in the rear. Immediately the tragic cry went up: 'The city is taken!' The soldiers fled, the Emperor died fighting bravely to the last, and that night began the awful three days' sack of Constantinople.

It was one small neglected door, the one weak spot in the city's defences, that led to its downfall. Let us look more closely. The real weakness was not in the walls: it was in a *man*. After all it was some one's responsibility to bolt and bar the Kerkaporta and the task was not done. That unknown man may have been careless, forgetful, afraid, lazy, or traitorous. He failed to do his part, and his weakness left the city weak. What does one of our hymns say?

'Leave no unguarded place.'

And we say to ourselves, 'We will leave no place unguarded, not on the coasts, nor in the air, nor on the moors, nor round the cities.' But how does the hymn go on?

'No weakness of the soul.'

That is where the defences really begin. If the defenders are loyal, careful, and courageous, each one intent on doing his part to the best of his ability, then a city and a country can rest secure.

We have grown used in our day to the idea of enemies working from within to help the enemies without. We call such folk 'Fifth Columnists' from the statement of a General in the Spanish Civil War who said that he was marching on Madrid with four columns of troops and that he had a fifth column working within the city. But this story of the Kerkaporta tells us that the fifth column may not only be within the city but within us. When we are wasteful, careless with our lights, talk without thinking, fail to do the things we are asked specially to do and go and do the things we are asked not to do, then we open a door to an enemy, then we are a weak spot in the defences.

So being warned by the hymn what we are not to do, let us look and see what we have to do.

Take every virtue, every grace,
And fortify the whole.

. . . . . .

Still walking in your Captain's sight,
And watching unto prayer.

We are to go on, ever looking to Jesus Christ to help and strengthen us within. If we are all doing that then we can say in glad confidence, 'The Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?'

The Christian Year.

SECOND SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.

'From Needing Danger to be Good.'

(A Talk to the Unbombed.)

BY THE REVEREND R. W. STEWART, B.D., B.Sc., KILLERMONT.

'Give glory to the Lord . . . before your feet stumble upon the dark mountains.'—Jer 13[16].

On every lip there is praise in these days for our sailors and soldiers and airmen; not only for their gallantry and daring and heroic endurance in the hour of battle, but also for the quiet bravery with which they enlisted, and their patience in long days of training, and for the fine qualities of character that they have displayed. The same kind of praise has been given to doctors and nurses who carry on their work of mercy without faltering in the midst of deadly peril, to wardens and rescue workers and fire fighters and hosts of others. The King and Queen have said to one group and another of brave men and women, 'You are wonderful.' Now while such praise is the enthusiastic, unmeasured tribute of gratitude and admiration it is also sheer simple truth. All kinds of people in these days and nights of danger have risen to great heights of goodness and unselfishness and courage. People who in ordinary times would have lived on a very average level have in hours of trial proved themselves to be noble and heroic, and we praise them, feeling that they are better men and women than we are.

Yet, think for a moment. Before the test came these were just ordinary people brought up and living in much the same way as ourselves. No doubt any average gathering is made up of folk who have very much the same kind of characters and faculties of mind and body. Very likely,

then, all have it in them, if the test came, to show similar virtues. Then why wait? Why not begin now to lead the courageous and unselfish life?

Last year a book called *Mrs. Miniver* made this point by quoting a prayer from a poem of John Donne in which he asks to be delivered 'from needing danger to be good.' Donne lived in the spacious times of Queen Elizabeth. War risks were familiar to him, for he had sailed the Spanish Main, fighting and treasure-hunting. He knew other risks too, for in these days religious convictions were apt to involve a man in danger to liberty and even to life. After many perilous experiences he settled in London to become famous as a preacher and a religious poet. One of his poems is 'Litany' in which he makes petitions for cleansing and protection from various sins, and this is one, 'Keep us from needing danger to be good!' He seems to have wondered whether in the quiet life of a scholar and minister he was really achieving goodness as much as in his adventurous youth. For the easy life is apt to be the soft life and in particular it is apt to become the selfish life. Donne feels that if his peace were destroyed and his security broken up it might be gain to soul and character. But why should it be needful for calamity or terror to come to move him to do and be his best. Cannot men live noble lives rich in good deeds and kindly service even while they enjoy safety and peace? 'Keep us,' prayed Donne, 'from needing danger to be good.' And so most certainly should those pray who still live in any measure of security and comfort. Are they going to try to keep in step with those others who have risen to the heights of achievement? Is it only blitz and battle that are to produce nobility of mind and conduct? Cannot those in civil life and in sheltered places even there bring to blossom some virtues of patience and endurance and self-forgetfulness?

There is need to pray. For it may be too optimistic an assumption to suppose that as average individuals all will rise to the occasion when it comes. An easy life may make men slack and unfit. Jeremiah voices the doubt, 'If thou hast run with the footmen, and they have wearied thee, how then wilt thou contend with chariots, and though in the land of peace thou art secure, how wilt thou do in the jungle of Jordan?' The essence of national effort at this time is preparation, training. Many now fit to do a patriot's part were unready a year ago, neither knowing what to do nor how to do it because they were not then trained. And there are virtues that no one will attain unless he sets himself to win them, and it should not take a war to make man want to be good.

One such virtue is a sense of social responsibility. In time of war numbers who were content to be idle are found undertaking work of national importance, moved by the danger to the country, or sometimes by the fear that, if they stayed idle, they might be conscripted for uncongenial labour. But it should not take circumstances of emergency to make all able-bodied people feel that it is not respectable to be living on the labour of others without contributing themselves to the common welfare. There is quite a lot to be said for the Russian principle of giving men and women votes on the qualification of being workers. One of the chief aims of education should be training in the sense of social responsibility. A delightful story is told by Dr. Alexandra Adler, in her book called *Guiding Human Misfits*, about a little boy of five. He had been left alone in charge of his younger brothers, one a baby, when the house took fire. The little fellow at once ran to the cradle, lifted the baby and carrying him in his arms pushed the brother aged two in front of him out of the house into the garden. Afterwards, when some one praised him for his prompt action, he grinned and replied, 'Mother said I was responsible for them while she was out.' The meaning of responsibility had already been taught to that child, and so he was ready when the test came.

Other circumstances than sudden danger may test the social conscience. It may be that a call comes to surrender wealth, or agree to large changes that may produce uncomfortable alterations in the style of living, and only those trained to put public before private interest will be able cheerfully to obey. It may be that the struggle for freedom against tyranny will become more and more a trial of patience and endurance in which people unaccustomed to perseverance and toil will grow tired or bored. In some such tests the French failed and the explanation was that their spirit had been corrupted in days of peace and ease so that the crisis did not work any miracle of reform and virtue; it just showed up the weakness that was there. Do not lead a slack, greedy, self-centred life with the vague assumption that if a big test were to come it could be successfully met. Begin now to form ways of thought and habits of conduct that are good, and therefore fit to bear any coming strain.

Perhaps the simplest virtue and the one which ought to be commonest is just kindness. 'Be ye kind one to another,' says the apostle, 'tender-hearted, forgiving one another even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you. Be ye therefore followers of God as dear children and walk in love.' One of the chief requirements for goodness in any state of society, flourishing or poverty-stricken, peaceful or troubled, is kindness. Life is constantly bringing chances of showing kindness. In every sort of circumstance kindness is called for. None is really good who is not kind. Now it might be supposed that in safety and happiness it would be easiest and most usual to be kind. But is this true? What is the very latest evidence on the point? In stricken cities there has been a sudden outpouring of mutual kindness and consideration and helpfulness amongst all conditions of people, every distinction being forgotten in the face of the common danger and overwhelming need. Whereas in safer, sheltered areas refugees are not always very welcome, as they bring with them their problems of misery and nakedness and hunger. Is then the wave of brotherliness and charity, which is lifting up the souls of the citizens of many a ruined area, to leave unmoved the districts that are more sheltered and fortunate in their compara-

tive quiet? Can men not learn to love one another without being bombed into it? Can they not learn in ordinary happy life to rise above narrow selfishness and be brave and patient and kind in little things as in great, and see to it that the blessings and opportunities, the hard work and the pleasures of life are fairly shared as in any well-ordered household is the case? Why wait till danger compels us to be good and kind!

Perhaps the nearest text in Scripture to the mood of John Donne is one of the many hauntingly beautiful snatches of poetry in Jeremiah—'Give glory to the Lord before your feet stumble upon the dark mountains.' It may not be easy then to make a beginning of faith and prayer and virtue, though so many seem to imagine that if deadly peril come, or bereavement, or a dangerous illness, that will be the time to make vows of goodness and turn to God. A minister was once visiting a man sorely stricken and lying fevered on his bed, and he began to open a Bible to read. The sufferer shook his head in sign that he was not fit to listen, and then grasping the minister's hand he smiled and whispered, 'I theekit ma hoosie afore the storm.' Winter is no time to thatch the roof. Prepare now for the storms that will surely come, and, as in the cottage and the castle there may be the same warm shelter, so in peaceful surroundings as on the stricken field there may flourish the same virtues of discipline and mutual loyalty and brotherly love. 'Keep us from needing danger to be good!' 'Give glory to the Lord before your feet stumble upon the dark mountains.'

THIRD SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.

Balaam—Desire in Conflict with Conscience.

BY THE REVEREND R. WRAGGE MORLEY, M.A., BOURNEMOUTH.

'And God came unto Balaam at night, and said unto him, If the men come to call thee, rise up, and go with them. . . . And God's anger was kindled because he went.'—Nu $22^{20.22}$.

The story of Balaam is a strange interlude in the history of Israel. It is curious how they had it to tell; for its action took place amid the ranks of their enemies. And it is curious too that they should tell it; for it is the story of a man showing pre-eminence in their own particular preserve—the knowledge of God and His ways—and he was an outsider. But it is a story that caught their imagination. It recurs over and over again in the Old and New Testaments. And each year, on this Sunday, we have it brought before us, as a subject for our thought. The reason is clear. It is full of the stuff of life. It is an elemental human story. And if its sources are many and complicated, its lessons are both clear and important.

Moses had just conquered the highland clans under Sehon, King of the Amorites, and Og the King of Bashan. On the neighbouring tribes the blight of fear had fallen. They dare not battle; why not then in the manner of their time seek supernatural assistance? That was what religion was for—to get you out of a tight corner. So thought Balak, King of Moab; and so people often think to-day. And for help in this direction there was just one man, Balaam, son of Beor.

Now Balaam was a good man who had studied the workings of providence, and had thereby gained much insight into life. He was a diviner and a soothsayer, of a type much sought after then, but more akin to a prophet than most of that tribe. To him Balak, believing, like Walpole, that every man has his price, sent his envoys with their tempting presents to beseech him to curse Israel. And Balaam retires to consult God. We must not make too much of this. It would obviously impress and it was what was expected of him. But he comes back with a refusal. And that was not expected. Did he want still more for his services? Something in his words and manner may have suggested this.

You remember the rest of the story—the more important envoys and richer presents, the second inquiry of God, the consent and the journey, the annoying episode with the ass, the attempts to curse, each frustrated by some impelling power within which made him utter blessings instead of curses; till Balak and Balaam part with nothing accomplished of their plan. Only later is the suggestion made that Balaam found another way, and suggested to Balak that Israel could be seduced more easily than subdued; and so became a byword for reproach and infamy down the ages among the people of God.

It is the story of a man's desires at odds with his conscience. And that is a crucial human problem of importance to us all. Let me quote Middleton Murry's frank words about his friend D. H. Lawrence, who flamed across youth's sky a few years ago: 'The duty of every living responsible man, who takes his share of the burden of life upon his shoulders, is to make his conscience and himself agree. This is the delicate work upon which all advance towards fuller life depends; this is the exploration of life to which the conscious soul is always committed. It is the discovery of the ultimate self; that inmost core in a man which must not be violated save on pain of self-destruction. . . . It is the point of integrity. This point in himself Lawrence gave up even the attempt to discover.' That is the reason for his fading influence. It is because this story wrestles with this problem that I think it has something to say to us still. Consider this first:

1. *The ways of a man with God.*

Balaam seems to have been a man of principle, with some knowledge of God and a general desire to walk His way. He certainly inquires of God about everything. But he seeks his own advantage. And when the second embassy appears he regards it as a direct piece of providence. Now he can try God again. He is trying to change God's mind to his own desiring, and that is always a dangerous thing to do. So, when the permission comes, he pays no attention to the obvious reluctance with which it is given, but jumps at the chance and goes, hoping to extract some further concession

in the matter of the cursing when he arrives. He will work God somehow. Religion should always further a man's own ends!

If I am right in my reading of this man, that is why at every turn he protests his integrity and obedience. The utterly committed man has no need to do it. And if, as I think it must be, this is his own account given as his apology at his trial—for he was slain with the judicial sword—then it looks like a plea of self-justification, a putting of himself on a pedestal in the hope of finding himself encircled by admiring or at least acquitting eyes.

To seek God out in order to bend Him to your own ends and desirings—is it so very far off and distant? To believe our wisdom is greater than His, because we are so much nearer the crucial circumstances—is there never thought of that to-day? It has a word to say to us in this sea-girt island fortress as much as to this harassed prophet on the hilltops of Moab! For we, like Balaam, are so often patchwork characters. We follow our conscience much as a man follows a wheelbarrow, pushing it before him the way he wants it to go. We are not convinced that God's ways are best at moments when we can't understand them. Let us look then a moment at

2. *The ways of God with men.*

When Balaam asked God the second time, God let him go. Why? God does work like that. Israel desires a king. God refuses and then allows it. Does He change? The people long for other food. God gives it in answer to their importunity, and they experience a strange leanness of soul. Life has not become richer and more satisfying, but poorer by a great deal. Why did God run this risk and let him go? Because there was nothing else for it. We must be free to go against the law of life and against God Himself, if there is to be any merit and development in choosing to go with Him. It is so in relation to our own children. There is a point when we can do no more. We have got to stand back and take the risks. Moreover, the evil was already done. Balaam was already on the other side. God did not make him a worse man by letting him go. It may have been his own chance to recover himself and become a better one. For had he stopped at home he might have spent his time chafing, feeling life was unfair, growing bitter, wrapped up more and more in selfish ends. But now conscience can get to work, and even the dumb creation seems to have a rebuking voice that gives him pause.

Whatever we think of it, this is life. What we lust after, long for, give up our hearts to, really desire, request from God and man, and to which we bend our life, we get in the spiritual realm. We can't will the evil and be saved from the consequences and fruits of it, at any rate in that inner self where God unmakes to remake the soul. There is no magical way of safety in life. We are only safe if we don't want to go, because it is against God's will. That heart alone is safe which is fixed upon God. And when we go God still deals with us; tries to bring sense to us. The road seems to close in upon us as upon Balaam; we are constrained, thwarted at times, brought to an issue; so that we may be brought to realize that God's way is best. There is one further word this story brings us. It reminds us of

3. *The importance of our dominant desires.*

There is a witty saying that defines man's ambition in this way: 'Getting on, getting honour, getting honest.' Balaam wanted to get on, he wanted to get honour, and because he wanted these above all, getting honest receded with the days. When desire is contrary to conscience, and when it is the deep undertone of our lives, it always wins. What else is the meaning of this dodging from hill to hill to get a different viewpoint, or the erecting of altar after altar, but this? He was determined to get his way. Our dominant desire always wins in the end. All our life begins to cohere at that one point. Here, then, is the wisdom we must learn. Integrity is the first essential of true life. We have a pattern and we have more, we have 'a personal centre of care and wisdom'; One who has the rights to our allegiance and the key to our hearts. Balaam feared God, maybe, but he did not love Him. As we look into the face of Jesus can we doubt that His heart is ever with us and His way will be our everlasting good? To that One we must make over our heart till we in all things will His will, and long above all things that that will shall prevail; then with conscience and desire working to one end, life will become unified and strong.

FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.

Christian Hopelessness.

BY THE REVEREND JOHN L. RIACH, B.D., LARGS.

'None is good, save one, that is, God.'—Lk 18^{19}.

'But love ye your enemies . . . hoping for nothing again.'—Lk 6^{35}.

'When the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?'—Lk 18^{8}.

The New Testament might deservedly be styled a book of hope. It speaks of the Christian being a person who, against hope, believes in hope: who despairs of no man: who abounds in hope. Yet paradoxically enough, regarding some things, the Christian cherishes no hope whatever, and the above verses indicate three such things about which the Christian is hopeless. Easter is the time of hope, but in that black period between the crucifixion of our Lord and the manifestation of Himself on Resurrection Morn, despair had ruthlessly ousted hope from the hearts of the Christian community, for we read in the Scriptures of two disciples who, not recognizing the risen Christ in His new form, said to Him in toneless voice, 'We trusted it had been He which should have redeemed Israel.' The hopes they had entertained concerning their Master had chilled to death in the breast. At this time in the Christian calendar, therefore, it might be fitting to look at these three things about which the Christian is hopeless.

1. *The Christian is hopeless regarding character.* After his Olympic triumph in the hundred metres,

Harold Abrahams, speaking to a group of athletes at Glasgow University on the science of sprinting, threw out the advice that before going to his mark in a hundred yards race, the runner should fix his eye on a stationary object beyond the finishing post, and, at the crack of the pistol, make for that selected thing although he is aware that he will run only part of the distance towards it.

It is advice similar to this that Jesus has given His followers. He has given us a mark in the realm of character to make for beyond our reach. Look at what He does. He calls upon His disciples to be perfect even as their Father in Heaven is perfect. We may approximate to Christlikeness in this life. We may attain the dizzy heights of perfection after death, but because of the bias towards evil with which we are born, because of the unideal environment in which we live, no Christian can hope to attain perfection in this life.

If ever a man should have been perfect in character it was Paul. Christ was his sole thought by day and night. How could he become like Him? How could he draw others to Him? Yet, when he was finishing his course, he had to confess he had not attained to the standard of character he had set himself. The testimony of the saints is the same. In spite of all their piety, when eternal sleep is about to overtake them, they 'are conscious most of wrong within.' The first text points out the same idea. Take the best men you know, challenges Christ, and their goodness simply cannot match the perfection of God. None is good save one, that is God.

Yet, in spite of the fact that he cannot hope to reach perfection in this life, the Christian makes that impossible goal his aim. Professor Dixon in his masterly survey of the English character asserts that Englishmen, on the whole, do not believe in aiming at perfection but merely in doing their duty. Duty for them stands for 'what is proper, appropriate, becoming.' It is a possible standard which any one can reach. But with the Christian it is not so. He reaches out after the impossible of being perfect, even although he has no hope of attaining that ideal in this life. Is there not method in such apparent madness? How else but in reaching for the unattainable ideal of perfection can moral self-satisfaction and pride, those deadly sins, be avoided?

2. *The Christian is hopeless, again, regarding the Christian Ethic.* In that peculiar parable of His, The Unjust Steward, Jesus tells of a man who has received notice from his Master. Summoning his Lord's debtors, he makes out the bill of each for exactly half the amount due. The motive of the steward in doing this dishonest kindness to these equally dishonest debtors was that the latter might receive their benefactor into their hospitable homes once he was unemployed.

This might be described as bargain kindness. Something was done in order that something might be received. In the New Testament all idea of bargaining is condemned. Men must not bargain with God (as the cleansing of the Temple reveals) and worship Him for what they can get, but for His own sake. Likewise, there is to be no bargain Christian Ethic. Jesus gave to the world the finest moral code imaginable. He made it clear, however, that no Christian must undertake to love his enemies and refuse to retaliate to injury in the expectation that others will do likewise to him. On the contrary, he is to obey this code without any hope of similar treatment in return.

As A. D. Lindsay put it, 'In the Sermon on the Mount all thought of reciprocity is given up. There is no stipulation whatever that others are to act in the same way.' Is that not the teaching of the second text? 'Love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend' said Jesus to that motley crowd, 'hoping for nothing again.'

3. Further, *the Christian is hopeless regarding the expansion of Christianity.* There is a story told of a child who received a box of bricks on one side of which was the map of the world and on the other, the figure of a man. The child set about constructing the world but, finding the task too difficult, gave it up. She then began to piece together the figure of the man and, succeeding, she turned the bricks over *en masse* to find the world complete in every detail on the other side. She got the man right and the world turned out right.

That is a parable. If the world is to be run on Christian lines then men must first be made Christian. But that does not mean that all men in the world must embrace the Christian faith to bring this happy state on earth into being. The influence of Christian character is enormous as Jesus pointed out when He spoke of a small piece of leaven leavening a whole lump. A small group of Christian people, if they are enthusiastic about their faith, can influence a whole community, many of whom are not Christians, to run affairs on Christian lines.

Franklin describes the amazing change which came over Philadelphia when George Whitefield preached in it. While many were converted, all were not. Yet that enthusiastic Christian nucleus was responsible for a complete change in the ways of the inhabitants. There is the Christian Church in China composed of only one per cent. of the population, yet that small body has an influence on the affairs of its country quite out of proportion to its numbers.

Because of this astounding fact it means that to have the world fashioned according to the Christian pattern it is not necessary to make all men Christian but a certain percentage only. It is well that such is the case, for the Christian has no hope of all people in the world embracing Christianity. Jesus knew men. He was aware that His gospel with its demands, standards, and sacrifices would always be accepted only by the minority, never the majority. As the third text puts it, 'When the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?'

When Rhodes of Africa was dying he murmured, 'So much to do, so little done.' That must be the feeling that comes over all sincere Christians as they look at the world. Only one per cent. of China, two per cent. of India, two per cent. of Africa, and a small percentage of Europe really

Christian! If the affairs of the world are to be conducted in accordance with the spirit and teaching of Jesus more must be won to His faith. That task Christians will undertake unflinchingly, without despair, if they keep in mind that, while they cannot hope for all men to become Christian, it is not necessary that every human embrace Christianity for the world to be run according to the will of their Lord.

FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.

Are you a Member of this Distinguished Family?

'Whosoever shall do the will of my Father . . . is my brother.'—Mt 12^{50}.

'God suffers some to lie soft and sit warm, but He has nobler business for His champions.'—Archbishop Leighton.

Grenville Kleiser, an American educationist, puts our regrets in the form of an alarming catalogue of 'ifs'. 'How different it would have been,' he says,

If you had only kept silent,
If you had promptly apologized,
If you had avoided that bad investment,
If you had taken daily exercise,
If you had said the timely word,
If you had stayed at home,
If you had persevered,
If you had daily prayed.

As for our successes how grey they look in the light we borrow from yesterday. Our quarrels seem so petty and our very triumphs so childish that somehow or other we find ourselves agreeing with Virginia Moore in her poem on war,

As nations when ten years have passed
After a very bloody war
Ask Heaven and the things that last
What they were fighting for.

All this talk has a very wise, superior air about it. It suggests that there's nothing in this world worth doing. It belittles action. It mocks at self-giving. It does not say it in so many words—it merely hints that the dead soldier is not so much a hero as a martyr by mistake. This thin, coward thinking is a dangerous lie. For everything that any man or any woman thinks of, does with a clear mind and a brave gentle heart, is the will of God and something therefore of a value which can never pass away. 'Then,' wrote an Irish saint, 'Jesus was in my heart. In His hand He held a silver lamp from which shone a golden light fairer than many suns. And because of its brightness I said to Him, "I sorrow with seven sorrowings that I have been so long in the dark." At which He answered, "If thou hadst not known the dark, thou couldst not have joyed in the glory of My light".' If we look at failure and disappointment from this angle then the discovery we make is that even they are the will of God.

It is, however, when one asks oneself the question, '*What is God's precise will for my life?*' that the real problem begins. Since while God's will is the same, the direction of God's will is not the same for every one. Here is a young farmer who loves the land. What is his Father's will for him? Surely it is that he bravely but eagerly recognizes that he is God's partner; that he sets himself to use the best of knowledge and of method to make these fields of his yield the best return; that he makes himself aware of the honour and trust that is his—namely, that he is a key-man among men: that he is the good neighbour and that he should glimpse the purpose that lies behind the beauty of brown earth, of the banners of the spring and of still summer noons, which is that all is meant to purify his thought and clothe his spirit with reverence. In plain English whoever we are, and whatever we do, God's will for us is that we take the gifts, the powers and the capacities He has given us, and use them to the utmost that is in us in the service of truth and love.

In the next place, *God's will is that we should be courageous enough to think ourselves out.* One calls to mind the saying of a famous Professor in the University of Glasgow. Through the haze of memory that beautiful face of his, lit up by two blazing, grey eyes, can still be seen, and a voice, aflame with urgency and conviction be heard, crying, 'Believe me, gentlemen, there is but one tragedy in this universe, and one only, one that is fatal to all growth, one that is final and irrecoverable, and this the tragedy of the man or woman who refuses to think.' His voice died away into a note of solemnity that seemed to make that winter's morning more sombre and desolate than ever, and through the dark, we watched the ghosts of men and women whose misery was complete. They were the faces of spirits who had refused to think. One listened with a sharp edge of doubting, feeling, 'Isn't he just a bit too dramatic? Too fiercely harsh?' No, he was right. There is only one hope-destroying, faith-destroying, love-destroying tragedy in this world, and this is the blank refusal to think. Because if we think we have to think ourselves out, and the prospect so terrifies thousands upon thousands of men and women that they simply refuse to face up to it. Suppose, however, that we are brave enough to do it, what exactly is it that happens? Why what but this! We discover that what we call our mind is simply another, if weaker, reproduction in us of God's mind. It has been woven out of the same material; upon the same loom. The same love of truth. The same hatred of evil. The same appreciation of loveliness. The same answering to the call of honour or duty. We discover that what we call our spirit is simply a bit of Him in us. We discover, last of all, that what we call our hunger for an unending life is simply our spirit's quenchless desire to breathe its native air. The body is an envelope. The sweetest home but an inn. The earth is a burnt-out star. Pleasure is a shadow. The happiness we call perfect is sprinkled with dust. But a home for this spirit which we are—where broken things are mended, and lost things are found, and we see a loved one's eyes again, and know a loved one's heart unchanged—this is the home for which our spirit faints. Hunger? Yes. But He who

has made our hunger offers bread for our hunger. 'Because I live, you shall live also.' Let us go, then, and dare to think ourselves out. Reach to the heart of our own divinity. Get from God through our prayers the assurance of our own eternity, and then a sun has flamed into our sky that sets beyond no sea.

The will of God! Take His power and use it. The will of God! Think ourselves out. The will of God! Take His son for our Saviour and Companion and Friend. Always back to Him. From whatever far lands of thought and strange through which our mind adventures. From whatever luring musics. From whatever peaks of aspiration our spirit climbs. Always, at the last, our feet seek back to Him, for in Him is life and His life is the light of men.[1]

[1] A. Maclean, *Walk in the Light*, 10

Is the Old Testament Christian Scripture?

By the Reverend James Wood, M.A., Macclesfield.

Not all Christians find it easy to regard the Old Testament as Christian Scripture. For, when the Old Testament and the New Testament are placed side by side, they are seen to exhibit marked differences. Marcion most certainly believed this, and, as a result, he rejected the Old Testament. Harnack, in a less violent manner, suggested that the Old Testament be relegated to the Apocrypha. Others, not so well known, have felt too, that simply because there is a *New* Testament, then the *Old* Testament is rendered otiose, so far as Christian Scripture is concerned.

However, even if it is admitted, as it must be, that the Old Testament is in some real sense subordinate to the New Testament, this subordination does not in itself 'dechristianize' the Old Testament. For, what makes the Old Testament Christian Scripture is not the edifying nature of its contents, but the principle of interpretation by which it is read. The Old Testament is Christian Scripture, not to any reader who happens to light upon it, but only to him who reads it with the eye of faith.

Externally considered, both Judaism and Christianity read one and the same book. To the one, it is Jewish, to the other, it is Christian, Scripture. From whence, then, is this difference?

Is not the difference due to the different principles of interpretation which are brought to the book? The Jew reads the Old Testament in the light of the revelation expressed in the Law. When read in this way, the Old Testament becomes the classic and normative document of Judaism.[1] But the Christian reads the Old Testament in the light of the revelation given in Jesus Christ. The Christian may say, at one time the Law did express in a written and codified form the Divine revelation, but since then there has been a new development, that is, the Divine revelation recorded in the New Testament. Thus, from the Christian point of view, the Old Testament revelation is incomplete. 'It represents a process, and an unfinished process, rather than an achievement. . . . Nevertheless, to see clearly whither the process is tending we must look beyond the Old Testament to the New, without which its witness remains incomplete.' (C. H. Dodd, *The Authority of the Bible*, 189.)

However, it should be noted that it is no arbitrary juxtaposition which connects the Old Testament with the New. As S. A. Cook has written,[2] 'Yet, in spite of the actual changes, the Bible, as a whole, presents a striking religious unity and continuity. History, archæology, and ideological continuity forbid any arbitrary severance of the two Testaments. . . .'

From the Christian point of view, it is not enough to describe the Old Testament as the record of Hebrew religion. What is there recorded needs to be interpreted in the light of the final revelation of God, made in Jesus Christ. When this is done, then the history of Israel is brought into vital relationship with that final revelatory act of God, viz. the Divine Self-disclosure in Jesus Christ. The light which shines from Him, sends its beams back along the pathway of the past history of the Old Testament, making clear to the eye of faith, the true significance of what had happened before. 'All this is no abstract theology, but a realistic interpretation of the Gospel story in relation to the whole history of Israel. The coming of Christ, His death and resurrection, constitute the fulfilment of that history, not as the last term in a process of development, but as the concentration in one decisive historical moment of the factors determinative of all preceding history, through which, consequently, that history becomes not only meaningful, but in the full sense real.' (C. H. Dodd, *History and the Gospel*, 145.)

Regarded in some such manner, it will be seen that the Old Testament's claim to be Christian

[1] 'For Judaism it remains to this day, with all its human imperfections, sovereign and supreme' (C. G. Montefiore, *Record and Revelation*, 429).

[2] *Journal of Theological Studies*, xli. (1940), 225.

Scripture resides in its claim to be revelatory literature. It is a record which not only records, but also reveals, and it reveals God in action on the plane of Israel's history. It is because it is part of the record of the Divine revelation that the Old Testament is to be regarded as Christian Scripture.

If the view expressed above be true, viz. that the Old Testament is Christian Scripture in so far as it is Revelation, then, if this be taken as a criterion, it may be possible to find some answer to the criticism that the Old Testament is not Christian. However, only a few of the more obvious criticisms will be considered here.

The most common criticisms directed against the Old Testament are (*a*) ethically it is sub-Christian and therefore ought not to be treated as Christian Scripture; (*b*) it is Jewish, national and particular, hence it cannot be the medium of a universal revelation; and (*c*) its inclusion in the Canon reflects the uncritical attitude of the Early Church, which should not be held as binding to-day.

What, then, can be said in reply to such criticisms?

First, it may be objected against the Old Testament, that for *ethical* reasons it cannot be Christian. The critic may assert that, in general, the Old Testament is on a lower ethical plane than the New Testament.

So far as it goes, this criticism is valid. The Christian is not concerned to maintain that the ethics of the Ten Commandments are on the same level as the ethics of the Sermon on the Mount. But if, as has been maintained above, the Old Testament is accepted, not on account of its ethics, but for its value as Revelation, is not the point of the criticism somewhat blunted? The view, which is contended for here, has been well expressed by A. B. Bruce. 'But suppose that revelation consisted in something much higher than moral education, even in the manifestation of a redemptive purpose, in the exhibition to our faith of God as the God of Grace, so supplying not only knowledge of duty, but power to become sons of God: and suppose that in the Bible we have the record of such a manifestation and exhibition,—could we then think of outgrowing the holy writings as worn-out school-books?' (*The Chief End of Revelation*, 21.) These words, of course, as used by Bruce, are applied to the Bible as a whole, but *mutatis mutandis*, his point is applicable to the Old Testament.[1] The Old Testament is accepted by the Christian, not on account of its ethics, but on account of its Revelation.

Secondly, it may be objected against the Old Testament that it is a Jewish book. Why should the literature of one nation only be singled out? Why choose a Jewish book to the exclusion say of Greek and Roman literatures?

The cogency of this criticism depends on the apparent contradiction between means and ends. How can a *particular* book be the medium of a presumably *universal* revelation?

In the first place, it may be replied that the suggested antithesis between 'particular' and 'universal' is unreal. As A. M. Fairbairn has put it, 'the ideas of a universal or natural and a particular or written revelation imply rather than exclude or contradict each other. The universal is not the uniform, nor the particular the exclusive. . . . But the only efficient form of universal action is particular, and the voice must be personalized in order to be heard. . . . The most highly specialized action will, therefore, be the most universal. And this is what we have in the Christian revelation: it is a record of the redeeming activity of God culminating in the history of the Redeemer.' (*Christ in Modern Theology*, 498.)

In the second place, it is difficult to conceive of Revelation apart from Election. Election, of course, is a religious rather than a philosophic term. But it does suggest that God's grace is not a matter of arbitrary favouritism, but is God actively seeking the welfare of all mankind. In the Old Testament, too, Election is not conceived in a narrow and exclusive sense. 'Other nations besides Israel do work for Yahweh in the execution of His redemptive purpose—as, *e.g.* Egypt, Cyrus, etc. . . .' (*E.R.E.*, v. 259a.)

Also, it should be recognized that in so far as there was limitation, it was so only for a temporary period. The fact that the Revelation ultimately became a written record is itself very significant. For, although in a sense it was anchored in Jewish History, it was in its written form made available for all mankind. As Hempel says, 'In the prophetic "literature" the content of revelation broke free from that which happens once here and now, and became a communication of an ever-valid will of God, and the announcement of a timeless event which will be consummated when the end of the world comes. *The literary development of prophecy meant the release of the revelation of God from a particular time*, but as has been emphasized, not a release from a particular people.' (Italics original. *Record and Revelation*, 67.)

There are other considerations which might usefully have been discussed, but perhaps enough has been said to show that even if in some sense the

[1] 'Whatever degree of authority, therefore, may attach to the New Testament as divine revelation belongs, in its own measure, to the Old. The cardinal ideas of both are intrinsically and historically inseparable, and herein consists the organic unity of the Bible.' (H. Wheeler Robinson, *Religious Ideas of the Old Testament*, 225.)

Old Testament is a Jewish Book, it is also, at the same time, universal.

Thirdly, it may be objected against the Old Testament that its inclusion in the Christian canon is due to historical circumstances which no longer obtain. It gained entry at a time when there was no New Testament in existence, and later, by its historical collocation with the latter it received canonization along with the New Testament. But, so the critic might assert, conditions are radically different to-day, and the time has now come to eliminate the Old Testament (in whole or in part) from the canon of Christian Scripture.

It is, of course, true that the history of the formation of the canon does not lend support to the view that the Old Testament books in it are the only ones, and the necessarily only ones that might have been included. Also that the acceptance of the idea of the canon does not necessarily carry with it the conclusion that the collection, as such, is sacrosanct. 'The margins of "canonicity" are historically and materially too undefined to justify a formal claim about the collection, as that it is due to some peculiar providence of God, conferring a peculiar authority on the collection as such.' (H. Wheeler Robinson, *The Christian Experience of the Holy Spirit*, 179.)

But even to admit that the canon is open to criticism does not in itself lead to the conclusion that the Old Testament, or part of it, should be excluded from Christian Scripture.

For to deprive a book of 'canonicity' does not alter the book in itself. It does not touch the intrinsic quality of the book. What canonization did in the first instance was, in modern phraseology, to register a 'value-judgment,' that such and such books do possess a certain quality, viz. the quality of revelation. Canonization comes late in the history of the use of the books. It recognizes what the Christian already apprehended, viz. that in these books Man was brought face to face with God. 'The authority that belongs to the Bible belongs to it, not as a book, but as revelation; what the canonizing process created was not a revelation, but a book. . . . The revelation did not come to be because of the canon; the canon came to be because of the revelation.' (Fairbairn, *op. cit.* 505.)

Hence, merely to revise the canon, with a view to eliminating the Old Testament, in part or as a whole, does not really touch that which makes the Old Testament Christian. Something more than the ideal of a logically-tidy and intellectually-precise idea of the canon is needed before the slow, careful judgment of the Church on the Old Testament can be set aside. The process this judgment followed was, of course, open to all the hazards of history. Apparently it was gradual, non-intellectual, and illogical. No judicial authority gave it clear direction. Heretics had as much to do with its birth, if not more, than the orthodox. Yet, notwithstanding, there is much to suggest that by this unconscious process the Christian mind was exercising a valid and spiritual logic, the result of which was to declare that such and such books commend themselves as Christian Scripture. Such a judgment, so slowly worked out and confirmed by many generations, is not lightly to be set aside, especially in the interests of speculation.

In so far as there is room for criticism of the canon, the way of advance is surely not the negative one of rejection of the Old Testament, but rather the positive method of better definition of the *idea* of the canon. What is needed in our day is a view of the canon which makes room for the new knowledge concerning the Old Testament, and which at the same time believes that the Old Testament still mediates that revelation of God, which in earlier days commended it to the Christian Church.

Contributions and Comments.

The World Church in the Third Year of War.

The approach of the third anniversary of the outbreak of war offers an opportunity to survey briefly the position of the church in the world, and to see how the common faith in Christ is standing the test of these years of total war.

In Europe it is generally true that the church is maintaining, and even deepening, its missionary outlook. There has been, for instance, in Germany a remarkable flow of new literature dealing with the world mission of the church. Money too is being collected even where it cannot be sent out of the country, and in this the Protestant churches of France have been notably generous. In Holland the distinguished missionary apologist, Dr. Kraemer, is taking a leading part in building up the spiritual life of the parishes. In Norway the missionary societies joined in the protest made by the churches against the lawlessness

and injustices connived at by the occupying government.

Facts such as these are hopeful for the future in Europe, and are further evidence for the belief that the church may be able to draw together the forces of goodwill in the rebuilding of the life of Europe.

Another fact too that the church historian will notice about these war years is the way in which American and British churches have rallied to the help of the stricken Continental missions. The American churches have provided over £150,000, and the British churches £6000, in addition to which several British missionary societies have supported nearly twenty Continental missionaries on their staffs. Some £90,000 has also come to help British churches from America. Practical fellowship of this kind is an effective sign of the reality of the 'world church.'

In the Far East the spirit of the Chinese church, in the fifth year of war, has been a tonic to the rest of the world church, and in the free west of China there are now immense evangelistic opportunities amongst the population which has moved there, and especially amongst the educational institutions. Remarkable progress is being made in the removal of mass illiteracy mainly under government direction. It is estimated that in Szechwan five out of eighteen millions of illiterates between the ages of sixteen and forty-five years have learnt to read and write in recent years. All this provides great new fields for evangelism.

The outbreak of a general war in the Far East has brought modern warfare into areas where the Christian church in the Pacific has accomplished much. But it is too early yet to assess what effect this will have upon 'younger churches.' In Japan itself there has been the formation, under State pressure, of one Protestant church involving thirty-three previously separate sections. What that may mean for the future of the Christian church there no one is able to predict. The 'foreign missionary' element serving the Japanese churches has practically ceased, and for the moment Japanese Christianity is without those links of fellowship which help to preserve the true catholicity of the church.

Another 'revolution' has been accomplished by a 'younger church' in the Dutch East Indies. There the remarkable Batak church in the Sumatra highlands—so largely the creation of the great German Rhenish mission—has declared its independence, and except for the control of its schools (now under the direction of three Dutch missionaries) is mainly managing its own affairs. Those who know the vigour and the missionary spirit of the Bataks prophesy a great future for them in the further evangelization of the Far East. It is said that where you find a Christian Batak he talks about his faith; two make a prayer meeting, three form a church, and where there are four you find a choir!

The 'deadlock' between India and Britain has been followed by responsible Christian leaders in both countries with increasing anxiety. Although it has often been difficult to suggest any new method of approach the influence of the church in this country, exerted in many private ways, has been welcomed and appreciated by those who bear political responsibility. Meanwhile the twenty-two-years old movement towards the union of the churches in South India approaches the eve of final decision.

One of the remaining difficult proposals, lay celebration of the Sacraments, has now been abandoned, and there is a hope that union—towards which all the churches concerned are pledged to work—may soon be a reality.

In the wide field of the British colonial empire, in which so many of the 'younger churches' have their setting, there has been since the war began a new sense of responsibility towards the people, and much attention is being given by government, at any rate in London, to the questions of race and the place of religion. A 'conscience about colonies' is badly needed amongst Christian people in this country if the church's word is to be listened to and respected. The war has revealed the strength and weakness of British colonial governments, but if the present inquiries and experiments in Jamaica are an earnest of Britain's intentions then a new day may be looked for.

The bitter cleavages of race and colour, however, do not show any marked signs of healing, and there are many fears that the 'South African attitude' may spread northwards in Africa into British controlled areas. One good sign, however, is the establishment in South Africa of a 'Goodwill Sunday' in the churches for the purpose of evoking a better spirit between English- and Afrikaans-speaking people, and between Christians and Jews. On the other hand, the new Christian Council of South Africa has been robbed of its intended comprehension largely on the race issue.

Here in Britain it is encouraging to record that the interest and financial support for the missionary work of the churches has been maintained in war time. There has been no major catastrophe in missionary finances as many feared, although many societies have lessened their commitments and thrown more responsibility on the 'younger churches.' In England there are an increasing number of united campaigns to present the world outlook, and in Scotland this has been done on a nation-wide scale.

This brief and inadequate survey leads to three main conclusions about the life of the world church in the third year of war: 1. *The world church is able to maintain fellowship in a divided world.* It speaks still across the frontiers and keeps alive the reality of a universal fellowship. 2. *The world church is resourceful and resilient.* It has shown that its organizations can meet the shock of war and bring practical aid to its various members. 3. *In an exhausted world men are turning to it.* It stands now, in this 150th year since its great modern missionary enterprises began, as the one fellowship of the living God, and if it is bold with the word of life men all round the world will increasingly turn to it for succour and worship.

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A Note on Ephesians ii. 14: αὐτὸς γάρ ἐστιν ἡ εἰρήνη ἡμῶν.

It is the purpose of this note to raise the question as to whether these words are simply parallel to such a phrase as 'Christ, who is our life' (Col 3^4). That is to say, do they mean simply that, in so far as we are ἐν Χριστῷ we have life (Colossians) or peace (Ephesians)? So it would seem that J. Armitage Robinson takes the Ephesian passage: 'in His own person He has abolished our enmity' (*St. Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians*, 64). This is indeed much. But it seems to the writer that the words may have a deeper meaning.

It is to be noted that the context of these words is a sacrificial one. It is 'in' or 'by the *blood* of Christ' that 'you who at one time were far off have been made nigh' (*v.*[13]). It was 'in His flesh' that the enmity was abolished (*v.*[15]). Thus the phrase 'He is our peace' is surrounded on the one hand by a phrase which refers definitely to the Cross, and on the other by a phrase which refers to our Lord's assumption of human nature. The whole setting is sacrificial (cf. διὰ τοῦ σταυροῦ, *v.*[16], etc.).

Such considerations as these give rise to the question as to whether the writer was not thinking in terms of the Old Testament sacrificial system, and when he wrote εἰρήνη had not in the back of his mind the term שְׁלָם (שְׁלָמִים), *peace offering*. In the Septuagint there are two main equivalents for שְׁלָם. The more common of the two is σωτήριον; the other is εἰρηνικός, the latter being close to the word under discussion, and occurring frequently in the two books of Samuel and the two books of Kings and once in Proverbs.

There is an interesting parallel to this suggestion in the Hebrew habit of thought which tended to identify the sin-offering with the sin, so that in such a passage as Lv 4^{24} the word ἁμαρτία means sin *offering*. This gives us the clue to the meaning of 2 Co 5^{21}, 'He made Him who knew no sin to be a sin offering for us. . . .'

Thus, while to most of the readers of this circular letter, the phrase αὐτὸς γάρ ἐστιν ἡ εἰρήνη ἡμῶν would convey little more than that which the usual translation conveys, to those who were familiar with Semitic thought-forms (as was the writer) there would lie behind its more obvious meaning the suggestion of 'He is our peace offering,' an offering of value for Jew and Gentile alike.

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Method of Work of the Author of the Fourth Gospel.

In the characteristic short and precise style of the Fourth Gospel we have the clearest indication of a personality behind the writing—one of the best proofs that this Gospel cannot be a compilation. But there are also certain features indicating the method of writing, which the Evangelist employed. The Gospel shows signs of having been written fairly quickly and of perhaps not having been revised; at several points the writer deals with his subject in a way more characteristic of the quickly written tale, based upon memory, than of the systematic and carefully compiled history of the type, say, of St. Luke's Gospel.

This method of work is aptly illustrated by the Prologue to the Gospel and the narrative immediately following:

After a short summary of his doctrine of the Incarnation, the Evangelist, in *v.*[6], wants to begin the narrative proper by introducing the figure of John the Baptist, but in describing the purpose of his mission he imperceptibly reverts to his earlier subject and continues his philosophical discussion of the λόγος and the Incarnation. In *v.*[15] he suddenly returns to the Baptist, but almost immediately takes up the subject of the λόγος again. Only in *v.*[19] does he finally succeed in beginning the narrative. But even here his mind is quicker than his pen: in *v.*[26]. 'ἐγὼ βαπτίζω ἐν ὕδατι' requires a complement of: 'αὐτὸς ὑμᾶς βαπτίσει ἐν Πνεύματι Ἁγίῳ (καὶ πυρί)' as in the Synoptic Gospels, or words to that effect, but the recording of the Baptist's remark about his own unworthiness has diverted the writer's thoughts, and he suddenly closes the narrative with a prosaic statement concerning the scene of the events described.

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John i. 13.

In these days when the creed of blood and soil and racialism is to the fore it is interesting to note that in Jn 1^{13} the word used is 'bloods,' in the plural. I do not think that a racial meaning has ever been suggested, but the plural would certainly seem to be able to bear it.

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Shibboleth (Judges xii. 6).

The difficulty, and sometimes the impossibility, of adequately translating a story from one language to another is well known, and a good example of this is found in the LXX of Jg 12^6, in connexion with the word 'Shibboleth.' The story runs:

> 'And the Gileadites took the fords of Jordan against the Ephraimites; and it was so, that when any of the fugitives of Ephraim said, Let me go over, the men of Gilead said unto him, Art thou an Ephraimite? If he said, Nay; then said they unto him, Say now

Shibboleth (שִׁבֹּלֶת = stream, or ear of corn); and he said Sibboleth (סִבֹּלֶת) for he could not frame to pronounce it right; then they laid hold on him and slew him at the fords of Jordan.'

But the translator also 'could not frame to pronounce it right.' Greek did not provide him with an equivalent of שׁ, so the story was told thus:

καὶ προκατελάβοντο ἄνδρες Γαλααδ τὰς διαβάσεις τοῦ Ιορδάνου τοῦ Εφραιμ, καὶ ἐγενήθη ὅτι εἶπαν οἱ διασεσῳσμένοι τοῦ Εφραιμ Διαβῶμεν, καὶ εἶπαν αὐτοῖς οἱ ἄνδρες Γαλααδ Μὴ ὑμεῖς ἐκ του Εφραιμ; καὶ εἶπαν Οὔκ ἐσμεν. καὶ εἶπαν αὐτοῖς Εἴπατε δὴ Σύνθημα (=watchword or countersign). καὶ οὐ κατηύθυναν τοῦ λαλῆσαι οὕτως. καὶ ἐπελάβοντο αὐτῶν καὶ ἔσφαξαν αὐτοὺς ἐπὶ τὰς διαβάσεις τοῦ Ιορδάνου.

The Vulgate, however, was able to tell the story in full by writing 'Scibboleth' and 'Sibboleth.' This too is interesting, for it suggests that the pronunciation of 'sc' in Latin was as it is in modern Italian, and not as some of us were taught to pronounce it in our younger days.

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When did Hezekiah reign?

WHEN Hezekiah in his illness despaired of life, Isaiah gave him as a sign (2 K 20[9]) that he should not die the retrogression of the sun's shadow on Ahaz' sundial. Those who have observed the phenomena of a major solar eclipse are aware that as the eclipse proceeds the shadow on a dial is first advanced, then thrown back, and finally restored to a normal mean. The intervention of clouds could determine which, if any, of these movements might be observable. On the 14th March in 711 B.C. an eclipse of unusual magnitude occurred. It would be visible at Jerusalem at 2 hours 18 minutes p.m. We may feel confident therefore in placing Hezekiah's accession roughly in 726 and his death in 698 B.C.

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Entre Nous.

'What man is there that knoweth not how that the city of the Ephesians is a worshipper of the great goddess Diana?'

In the *Hibbert Journal* for January 1942 Mr. Hamilton Fyfe has contributed a warning article, the refrain of which is 'Remember France.' The title of the article is 'Matthew Arnold and the Fall of France.' Matthew Arnold recalled more than fifty years ago the question of the Town Clerk of Ephesus, and then asked, 'What man is there that knoweth not the city of the French is a worshipper of the great goddess Lubricity?' 'That goddess has always been a sufficient power amongst mankind, and her worship was generally supposed to need restraining rather than encouraging. But here is now a whole popular literature, nay, and art too, in France at her service: stimulations and suggestions by her, and to her, meet one at every turn.' Arnold declared the consequences of deliberate and habitual lustfulness to be 'an unsettling and weakening of the powers of the understanding as well as the rendering of the heart thoroughly corrupt.' What he meant is clear. He was not denouncing lapses due to overmastering desire. He had in mind frequent and artificial provocations of lustfulness. He had in mind the distinction between Rabelais with his obscenity, which however is not meant to be provocative, and is not provocative, and the niggering suggestiveness which came in about the middle of the eighteenth century.

It is rather more than fifty years ago since Matthew Arnold foretold the downfall of France. 'If the disease goes on and increases, then things will go from bad to worse with her. She will more and more lose her powers of soul and spirit, her intellectual productiveness, her skill in counsel, her formidableness as a foe, her value as an ally.'

The prophecy has come true, but in one respect, says Mr. Hamilton Fyfe, Arnold was wrong. It was Arnold's theory that States were destroyed by the 'moral failure of unsound majorities,' but in Mr. Hamilton Fyfe's opinion it is a small minority which should be blamed. In this minority were included the writers who set forth French opinions and ideas; painters, sculptors, and architects who produced French art. The mass of the people were swayed by the influences that were brought to bear upon them. Mr. Hamilton Fyfe urges that we in England should guard ourselves against a like danger. 'We have had during the past twenty years or so a disagreeably large increase in the evidences of Aselgeia worship in Britain.' Since the war this has been more and more evident, and Mr. Hamilton Fyfe refers to a statement of the *Daily Herald* in the beginning of 1941 that 'the war has brought about a great change in British authorship and that you see openly sold now "raw" novels that a few years ago would have raised an outcry.' Mr. Hamilton Fyfe confirms this from his own observation and says that the sale of one of the 'rawest' has passed 200,000 copies. What is to be done?

In his opinion the most damaging treatment is silence. If they are not talked about they are not read, they do not sell. Attacking them increases their number.

Faith.

The Bishop of Lichfield's broadcast talks—so attractive in their thoughtfulness and humanity—have been published by the Cambridge University Press. The Bishop gives six *Things I Live By* (6d.). Faith comes first, and in this chapter we have one of his simple illustrations.

'Two scientists were once looking at the famous sphinx, that huge and ancient carved figure which has sat where it is for some 5000 years, above the Nile valley, with an inscrutable look on its stony countenance. "What," said one of them, "would you ask the Sphinx, if you could put a question to it?" His friend thought a moment and then he replied, "I think I should ask 'if the universe is friendly.'"

'Now, one of the things I live by—I dare say you do also—is a deep certainty that the universe *is* friendly: nay more, not just that "it," but *He* is friendly. And I am not afraid to use the word "certainty." I can't prove my certainty to you; even if there was time; it isn't that sort of certainty. It's rather the kind of certainty which results from something big outside you getting securely clicked with something deep within you.'

Second Thoughts.

'In the past I have been sceptical of most of the proposals for reunion with the Free Churches,' confesses Mr. Sidney Dark who was until recently Editor of *The Church Times*, and then forcibly goes on to write: 'The war, however, and all that is now at stake have made it clear to me that, as the continuance of national independence and individual freedom throughout the world can only be secured by the close and brotherly co-operation of all the English-speaking peoples, so the only possibility of Christian opinion influencing the revolution through which we are living so that it may be a Christian revolution depends on a similar co-operation between the mass of English-speaking Christians in practice, between the Church of England and the Free Churches.

'This, it has recently been made clear, is the opinion of the Archbishop of York, the Bishop of Chichester and other Anglican leaders. . . .

'In view of the horrible and successful rampaging of the devil, with its consequence of death and suffering, with the threat to all that is comely and of good report, I can no longer understand how any Christian can oppose proposals for whole-hearted joint action, even though such co-operation may mean the modification of cherished claims.' [1]

Wilfrid Gibson.

In *The Alert* (Oxford University Press; 3s. 6d. net) we have some fifty new poems by Wilfrid Gibson. In most of these the note is one of contrast between the pleasant homely things of everyday life and the tragedy of war.

THE SHEPHERD.

Within a wattled cote on the Ridgeway Down
Tending his labouring ewes by the faint light
Of his horn-lantern, through the cloudy night
The shepherd hears high overhead a flight
Of raiders making for some Western town.

Shielding the light within his coat, he stands
For a brief idle moment harkening
To that deep drone of death upon the wing;
Then turns to his own business, to bring
Innocent life to birth with tender hands.

Though there is suffering there is a feeling of hopefulness. This idea occurs and recurs in the volume. We have it in *The Promise.*

Clear crocuses are thrusting through the mould;
And from a wattled fold
Nearby
There comes a newborn lamb's keen quavering cry.

The world about us crashes in insane
Fury—and yet again
The earth
Brings loveliness and innocence to birth.

Again in *Hexham Abbey* we have the further thought developed that this hope springs from the fact that man though he is a destroyer is man the builder too.

And, as with eager footsteps we advanced
Through the South Transept with enraptured eyes,
From off our hearts fell the perplexities
Of these calamitous times; and we forgot
Awhile the warring of nations and the lot
Of the battalioned youngsters doomed to march
Into annihilation—pier and arch
Springing in sunshine seeming still inspired
With the adoring ecstasy that fired
Those early craftsmen; and we recalled how man,
Builder and breaker since the world began,
Betrayed by frailties of the mortal flesh,
Is yet a phœnix soul that springs afresh
Resilient to the imperishable gleam
Out of the self-wrought havoc of his dream,
From devastation fashioning anew
His vision; and that to his best self true
Man, the destroyer, is Man, the builder, too.

[1] *Not Such a Bad Life.*

Printed by MORRISON & GIBB LIMITED, Tanfield Works, and Published by T. & T. CLARK, 38 George Street, Edinburgh. It is requested that all literary communications be addressed to THE EDITOR, King's Gate, Aberdeen, Scotland.